

# ***HAAL AHWAL***

Monthly News Reviews on Food and Agriculture

**September, 2024**

**Roots for Equity**



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Monthly News Reviews on Food and Agriculture

**September, 2024**

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**Roots for Equity**



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1 Hectare = 2.471 Acres

1 Acre = 4,840 Square Yards

1 Ton = 25 Mann = 1000 Kg

1 Mann = 40 Kg

# Preface

Back

The *Haal Ahwal* was initiated in 2013 as an Urdu quarterly publication and came out with more than 20 journals till 2019. From 2020 onwards, due to Covid19's lockdown, and other resource gaps the publication was discontinued. The Urdu version of *Haal Ahwal's* was compiled as a fairly comprehensive resource bringing together current news and developments in the agriculture sector. Its aim was to provide readers with a chronological order of developments in various sub-sectors of agriculture and its interconnected domains to develop their understanding on the political economy of agriculture.

With the publication in hand, it's obvious that *Haal Ahwal* is being launched once again. However, after a gap of three years, it comes with some changes. The first most apparent is that, this time it's being published in English. The range of topics remain much the same, following the previous pattern of more coverage of Pakistan's domestic scene and sparingly international coverage. *Haal Ahwal* will now be on a monthly basis and not quarterly.

The publication covers a wide range of subjects, encompassing various aspects of agriculture and related fields. It delves into topics such as farmers, laborer, agricultural resources (including land, water, and inputs), seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, agricultural loans, agricultural machinery, and industrial production. News items on food and cash crops, fruits and vegetables, livestock, fisheries, and poultry are added. And then on more macro issues of neoliberal policies, trade, exports, imports, the corporate sector including agrochemical companies, food and fertilizer companies, corporate lobbies and foreign aid are also covered. Related issues such as environment, pollution, health and safety, climate change, and natural disasters, poverty, inflation, food security and people's and farmers resistance also have particular emphasis. All these topics will be covered more fully in the national context and where relevant to Pakistan, as part of international policies and politics. In addition, there is coverage of news on international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank,

Asian Development Bank; aid agencies such as the USAID and others as well as the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Though the layout of the news items has been changed quite a bit, we are retaining our take on the news items covered under Points to Ponder, which is given in the very beginning of the publication. The next section is based on excerpts of what the editorial team considers the most important news items in this period. This is followed by table of contents making it easier for readers to look for their topics of interest. And then we have the meat of the publication based on abbreviated news items included in each sub-section. As was the case for the Urdu *Haal Ahwal*, two major newspapers have been used for the news items included, namely the “Daily Dawn” and the “Business Recorder.” Please note, only the Sunday newspaper is used for news coverage from “The Daily News.”

At the end, we would like to add that comments and critique for making the resource more useful to our readers is very welcome.

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10,000	10 Thousand	10 Thousand	دس ہزار
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1,000,000	1 Million	10 Lac	دس لاکھ
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1,000,000,000	1 Billion	1 Arab	ایک ارب
10,000,000,000	10 Billion	10 Arab	دس ارب
100,000,000,000	100 Billion	1 Kharab	ایک کھرب

# Glossary

Back

**AA:** Anticipatory Action

**ADB:** Asian Development Bank

**ADP:** Annual Development Programme

**AI:** Artificial Intelligence

**APMDD:** Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development

**AQI:** Air Quality Index

**AT:** Awami Tahreek

**BFBIO:** BF Biosciences Limited

**BJP:** Bharatiya Janata Party

**BOP:** Bank of Punjab

**BRI:** Belt and Road Initiative

**C3S:** Copernicus Climate Change Service

**CAA:** Concerned Citizens' Alliance

**CCRI:** Central Cotton Research Institute

**CDWP:** Central Development Working Party

**CEPA:** Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement

**CPEC:** China Pakistan Economic Corridor

**CRS:** Crop Reporting Service

**DAP:** Di-Ammonium Phosphate

**DRF:** Disaster Risk Financing

**EAD:** Economic Affairs Division

**ECC:** Economic Coordination Committee

**ECNEC:** Executive Committee of National Economic Council

**EFF:** Extended Fund Facility

**EU:** European Union

**FAO:** Food and Agriculture Organization

**FCEPL:** Friesland Campina Engro Pakistan's

**FDI:** Foreign Direct Investment

**FFC:** Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited

**FUUAST:** Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science, and Technology

**FY:** Fiscal year

**GB:** Gilgit-Baltistan

**GBM:** Ganges-Brahmaputra Meghna

**GCF:** Green Climate Fund

**GDA:** Grand Democratic Alliance

**GDP:** Gross domestic product

**GHG:** Global Greenhouse Gas

**GTA:** Grand Teachers Alliance

**HBL:** Habib Bank Limited

**IAEA:** International Atomic Energy Agency

**IFAD:** International Fund for Agricultural Development



**IFFEd:** International Finance Facility for Education

**IFIs:** International Financial Institutions

**IIF:** Institute of International Finance

**IIUI:** International Islamic University Islamabad

**IMF:** International Monetary Fund

**Irsa:** Indus River System Authority

**IWT:** Indus Waters Treaty

**JSM-R:** Jeay Sindh Mahaz-Riaz

**KBA:** Karachi Bar Association

**KKH:** Karakoram Highway

**KU:** Karachi University

**MEP:** Minimum Export Price

**MEP:** Minimum Export Price

**MNCs:** Multinational Companies

**MoM:** Month-on-Month

**MoU:** Memorandum of Understanding

**MSP:** Minimum Support Price

**MUET:** Mehran University of Engineering and Technology

**MWM:** Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen

**NARC:** National Agricultural Research Centre

**NDMF:** National Disaster Management Fund

**NI:** Nutrition International

**NOAA:** National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**NPL:** Nestle Pakistan Ltd

**OPF:** Overseas Pakistanis Foundation

**PARC:** Pakistan Agricultural Research Council

**PBS:** Pakistan Bureau of Statistics

**PCCC:** Pakistan Central Cotton Committee

**PCGA:** Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association

**PDA:** Peshawar Development Authority

**PDMA:** Provincial Disaster Management Authority

**PDNA:** Post-Disaster Needs Assessment

**PDWP:** Provincial Development Working Party

**PFF:** Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum

**PHC:** Peshawar High Court

**PJBF:** Pakistan Japan Business Forum

**PMD:** Pakistan Meteorological Department

**POWA:** Prosecution Officers Welfare Association

**PPP:** Pakistan Peoples Party

**PTU:** Punjab Teachers Union

**REAP:** Rice Exporters Association Pakistan

**SAI:** Sindh Abadgar Ittehad

**SBP:** State Bank of Pakistan

**SBRMTA:** Sindh Balochistan Rice Millers and Traders Association

**SIFC:** Special Investment Facilitation Council

**TCCF:** The Coca-Cola Foundation

**TDAP:** Trade Development Authority of Pakistan

**UPFL:** Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited

**UK:** United Kingdom

**UN:** United Nations

**UNEP:** United Nations Environment Programme

**USAID:** US Agency for International Development

**USA:** United State of America

**VBMP:** Voice for Baloch Missing Persons

**WHO:** World Health Organisation

**WTO:** World Trade Organisation

**WWF:** World Wildlife Fund

**XR:** Extinction Rebellion

**YoY:** Year-on-Year

**MMT:** Million Metric Tonnes

**KCGTS:** Kissan Card, Green Tractor Scheme

# NEWS EXCEPTS

## NATIONAL NEWS

### AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES

- 1,000 farming experts will be sent to China for training in agricultural sector. Pakistan imported agricultural products of around 10 billion dollars annually due to low yield per acre.
- Pakistan was allocating only 0.12 pc of its agricultural GDP on R&D, which was lowest among regional countries.
- Financial updates since 2013 highlighted a research budget increase to Rs300 million in the fiscal year 2022-23.
- At NARC, experimental farm area of about 1400 acres is being fully utilised to undertake research on more than 120 commodities. At least 98 laboratories are adequately equipped with qualified manpower in every sub-sector of agriculture.
- Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif said they are introducing Kissan Cards, Agricultural Mall Pilot Project, Green Tractor Scheme, Agriculture Graduates Internship and Tube Well Solarisation projects for the development of agriculture and socio-economic uplift of farmers in Punjab.
- The CM said, “Delivery of 40,000 Kissan Cards to the farmers through 136 agriculture centres in the province has started.
- Pakistan’s economy during FY2024 grew by 2.38 per cent, agriculture emerged as a main driver of economic growth, registering an impressive growth of 6.25 per cent due to double- digit growth in output of major crops.
- CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif launched a ‘historic’ agriculture graduate internship programme which will engage 1,000 graduates at Rs60,000 per month stipend.
- Growers have condemned what they describe as extremely low returns on farm produce amid an unprecedented surge in production costs.
- Farmers have faced up to 53 pc losses since April 2024 compared to the previous year’s rates. Cumulative losses from the sale of various crops have surged to Rs 1,000 billion.
- The soaring prices of crop inputs and electricity tariffs have rendered farming unviable, particularly for small landholders who make up around 7.47 million of the total 8.3 million farming community.
- The Sindh Abadgar Ittehad (SAI) and civil society leaders in Thatta opposed proposed amendments to the Indus River System Authority Act 1992 and called for their immediate withdrawal.

- Irrigation ministers of Balochistan and Sindh rejected federal government's proposed amendments to Irsa Act, asserting that any such move would violate 18th constitutional amendment.

## **AGRICULTURAL INPUTS**

- The Bank of Punjab (BOP) after scrutiny has approved 280,000 applications of farmers to obtain "Chief Minister's Kissan Card" which will enable them to buy inputs for their crops.
- 9,500 tractors will be provided to the farmers under the Chief Minister Punjab Green Tractor Scheme across the province and the Punjab government should provide a subsidy of Rs 9 billion 50 crore in this regard.
- Farmers and agriculturists have asked government not to implement a proposal seeking increase in sales tax on tractors from 10 to 18 per cent, claiming that it may lead to a serious blow to mechanisation of the agriculture sector.
- Agricultural sector plays a key role in the country's economy, contributing 24pc to gross domestic product and employing 37.4pc of the total workforce.
- Urea sales in August tumbled 14pc to 560,000 tonnes in August compared to 650,000 tonnes in the same month last year, while it came down 9pc MoM due to monsoon season.
- Punjab Minister for Agriculture and Livestock said the government has increased the development budget of agriculture by 250 percent this year.
- The 36th meeting of the Sindh Seed Council approved three cotton varieties for general cultivation. The approved varieties include one non-BT (CRIS 644) and two BT varieties (CRIS 674 and CRIS 682).
- Sindh government has approved 12 innovative varieties of cotton, wheat, mustard, ber and other crops.
- Vegetable farmer groups consisting of 5 to 10 farmers will be given subsidy on seeds, fertilizers, drip irrigation and solarization

## **AGRICULTURAL OUTPUTS**

- The Pakistan Central Cotton Committee (PCCC) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations have joined hands for cotton research and sustainability in the country
- A staggering fall of up to 60 per cent in the production of cotton both in Punjab and Sindh by Aug 31 has rung alarm bells in the textile sector.
- The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and FAO of United Nations have trained farmers from Punjab and Sindh to employ nuclear-derived climate-smart agricultural practices to optimise rice productivity.
- Rice is a food staple for 60 per cent of the Asian continent, with about 90pc of the global rice crop grown and consumed in Asia.

- Rice farming in the region uses over 135 million hectares and directly employs more than 300 million people in its cultivation and production.
- The Punjab government has decided to launch a project for the off-season provision of onion and tomatoes to check hike in their prices.
- The chief minister also approved a plan to start agricultural machinery rental services across the province for the convenience of farmers

## **SUB – AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIONS**

- International Fund for Agricultural Development will launch an initiative next year to support farming and fishing in Sindh to provide a sustainable livelihood in areas extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The project will have a total cost of \$163.5 million. The IFAD will provide a loan of \$60m, and the Sindh government will contribute \$6.7m to cover the project’s operational costs. IFAD will plug a financing gap of \$40m under its other programme.
- The first production of Punjab government’s “biggest” pilot project of shrimp farming in Pakistan will be ready next month with Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz hoping \$1 billion foreign exchange annually through its export.
- The CM also set a target of shrimp farming on 100,000 acres across Punjab, Currently, there are more than 6,800 private fish farms span over an area of 86,000 acres across the province.
- In Punjab, over 9 million acres of land remains saline and brackish, barren and non-productive.

## **TRADE**

- Merchandise exports increased nearly 16pc to \$2.74 billion in August from \$2.36bn in the corresponding month last year. In July, exports grew 11.83pc.
- In FY24, Pakistan’s merchandise exports rose 10.54pc to \$30.64bn from \$27.72bn in the preceding year.
- Imports grew 5.67pc to \$8.63bn in July-August FY25 from \$8.16bn over last year.
- In FY24, rice exports stood at \$4bn. Pakistan could potentially reach a \$10 billion rice export target by 2030.
- The federal cabinet gave ex post facto approval and endorsed the signing of the Trade Framework Agreement between Pakistan and Mercosur, a South American trade bloc comprising Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay.
- The country’s exports increased by 14 percent during the first two months (July-August) of current fiscal year 2024-25 and stood at \$5.050 billion compared to \$4.430 billion during the same period of last fiscal year 2023-24.

- Trade deficit narrowed by 4.20 percent during the first two months of the current fiscal year and stood at \$3.578 billion compared to \$3.735 billion during the same period of last fiscal year.
- Country's imports increased by 5.67 percent and stood at \$8.628 billion during the first two months of the current fiscal year compared to \$8.165 billion during the same period of last fiscal year.
- Pakistan trade imbalance with the Middle East widened 35.5 per cent to \$1.081 billion in the first month of 2024-25 from \$797.78 million.
- Country exported over 5.8 million tonnes of Basmati and non-Basmati varieties of rice during the year July 2023-June 2024 to earn \$3.89bn.
- The period of a massive boost to Pakistan's rice exports is over after the Indian government's decision to remove the floor price of Basmati rice and relax restrictions on export of other rice varieties.
- ECC of the Cabinet granted conditional approval for export of 40,000 metric tons of sugar to Tajikistan.
- Pakistan removed a floor price for rice exports, the country's commerce ministry said, following a similar move by neighbouring India.
- The Ministry of Commerce has withdrawn the minimum export price (MEP) for rice, a move expected to lead to a decrease in export value and increase under-invoicing during the current fiscal year.
- With the removal of the Minimum Export Price (MEP), Pakistani rice traders can now export without price restrictions.

## **INTERNATIONAL AID / LOAN / INVESTMENT**

- The Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the country rose by 55.5 percent during the first two months of this fiscal year (FY25).
- The SIFC is a very useful institution and framework under which our four brother countries have allocated \$27bn for investment. Saudi Arabia allocated \$5bn, UAE and Kuwait \$10bn each and Azerbaijan \$2bn.
- Pakistan would obtain \$20.635 billion loan as per signed agreement between Economic Affairs Division (EAD) and the Exim Bank of South Korea.
- Saudi Arabia has offered 15 percent investment in the Reko Diq copper and gold mine project. Primarily operated by Canada's Barrick Gold, which holds a 50 percent stake.
- Friendly countries have extended assurance of investing twenty seven billion dollars in Pakistan in the next five years.
- Saudi Arabia has announced to invest five billion dollars, while UAE and Kuwait will each invest ten billion dollars and Azerbaijan will invest two billion dollars.

- China has also shown willingness for second phase of CPEC. Danish company has announced to invest two billion dollars in Pakistan’s Port Infrastructure.
- Minister for Commerce has called for the establishment of joint ventures between Pakistan and Belarus in the industrial and agricultural sectors.
- During the last financial year (2023-24), the trade volume between Pakistan and Belarus was recorded at \$34.88 million, with Pakistan exporting goods valued at \$0.39 million to Belarus and importing goods worth \$34.49 million.
- Pakistan and Belarus discussed different options for a joint venture to establish a tractor plant in the country. Both sides agreed on cooperation in the livestock sector, the seed sector, the mechanisation of agriculture, and increasing market access for agricultural and livestock products.
- European Union announced it is providing €700,000 in humanitarian aid to Pakistan.
- A leading European agricultural production and food trading holding company of Italy has acquired 50 per cent shareholding in a Pakistani company engaged in paddy rice procurement and processing.
- Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has invited American banks to invest in Pakistan in key sectors of infrastructure, energy, technology and agriculture.
- Chinese investment company RUYI will set up textile parks in Pakistan and will invite around 100 Chinese textile firms to invest in the facilities. These parks are expected to export products worth \$2 billion in the first phase and another \$5bn in second phase, which will create 300,000 to 500,000 local jobs.
- Beijing has been developing road, rail and port infrastructure in Pakistan as part of its \$65bn investment CPEC.
- Chinese companies signed various MoUs with their Pakistani counterparts for investment in textile technology, agriculture and livestock sectors in Pakistan.

## **INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (IFIs)**

- ADB approved a \$320 million loan to support the rehabilitation and improve climate-resilience.
- Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb is sure to get approval from the International Monetary Fund’s executive board for a new \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility this month the debt servicing has exceeded \$26bn this year.
- Just recently, under the \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility, IMF introduced a new condition that requires Pakistan’s federal and provincial governments to phase out the crop minimum support price (MSP) system by June 2026.
- IMF’s board approved a \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility for Pakistan, providing a critical boost to the country’s struggling economy.
- Pakistan has received “significant financing assurances” from China, Saudi Arabia and UAE linked to a new IMF program that go beyond a deal to roll over \$12 billion in bilateral loans owed to them by Islamabad.

- State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) announced that it has received the first tranche of \$1.03 billion from IMF.
- The Fund has projected Pakistan’s economic growth rate to rise to 3.2 per cent in the current fiscal year, compared to 2.4 per cent in the previous year.
- Further it forecasts a sharp decline in inflation, with the average rate projected to fall from 23.4 per cent to 9.5 per cent.

## **POLICY**

- CDWP cleared a total of eight development projects worth Rs144.3 billion.
- Ecneec approved six mega development projects with Rs 178.1bn in the areas of health, agriculture, energy and transport.
- PDWP approved six schemes with an estimated cost of Rs14 billion.
- Afghanistan said work would begin on a \$10 billion gas pipeline TAPI pipeline — running through Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India.

## **SOCIO – ECONOMICAL CONDITION**

- The domestic debt of central government increased by Rs537 billion in July, reflecting the surging expenditure of the state machinery.
- The total debt surged by Rs7.827tr to Rs69.604tr from Rs61.777tr in July 2023.
- The federal government’s total debt stocks rose to Rs 69.6 trillion mark at the end of July 2024 primarily due to borrowing from domestic and foreign sources to finance the fiscal deficit.
- On Year on Year basis, the central government’s total borrowing from domestic and external resources rose by 12.66pc or Rs 7.827 trillion, as federal government’s total debt stock stood at Rs 61.777 trillion in July 2023.
- The country borrowed \$714.74 million from multiple financing sources during the first two months (July-August) of the current fiscal year 2024-25 compared to \$3.206 billion borrowed during the same period of 2023-24.
- National Nutrition Survey report ‘Cost of In Action Tool’ revealed that more than 41 percent of Pakistani women are anaemic, while 22.4% are vitamin A deficient.
- Nutrition International said that Pakistan loses at least 17 billion dollars every year due to malnutrition.
- Raw food exports have climbed for the past 13 consecutive months despite the highest food inflation in history.
- In the first two months, sugar exports reached 86,148 tonnes, compared to 6,146 tonnes in the same months last year, showing an increase of 160.26pc.
- Due to a sustained surge in export figures over the past two years, the average price of basmati rice has surged to Rs400 per kg from Rs150, restricting buying from domestic consumers.



## **ENVIRONMENT**

- Smog is responsible for 250,000 deaths annually

## **CLIMATE CHANGE**

- United States Ambassador Donald Blome launched “Recharge Pakistan” — an ambitious climate initiative aimed at strengthening flood resilience and improving water security in some of the country’s most vulnerable regions.
- The USAID has contributed \$5 million to a partnership with WWF and Coca-Cola Foundation. This partnership will leverage a \$66m grant from Green Climate Fund (GCF) to complement natural systems (watershed, wetlands, drainage system, forestation) to enhance Pakistan’s climate resilience with the goal of reducing flood and drought risk across the Indus Basin.
- In recent years, through the US-Pakistan “Green Alliance” framework, we have partnered with both industry and the Pakistan government on renewable energy, smart agriculture and water management. The United States has provided \$5 billion to the Green Climate Fund.

## **CLIMATE DISASTERS**

- Pakistan has received \$10.9 billion from international development partners out of the \$30 billion total estimated loss for post-flood reconstruction work.
- Recent heavy rain and subsequent flooding have caused widespread damage to various crops across the province, resulting in an estimated loss of Rs86.86 billion to farmers, 541,351 acres of crops had been completely destroyed, specifically 293,580 acres of cotton crop had been seriously affected by the downpour. Rice crop had been completely destroyed on 35,271 acres and partially damaged on 269,016 acres,
- Sugar cane crop had been completely destroyed on 26,382 acres and partially damaged on 69,689 acres.
- One-third of the total global child population, 766 million, were exposed to extreme heatwaves between July 2023 and June 2024 as temperatures hit new record highs.

## TRADE

- A new World Trade Organisation report has stated that global commerce has played a critical role in reducing extreme poverty from 40pc to 11pc.
- Between 1995 and 2023, global per capita income, adjusted for inflation, increased by approximately 65 per cent, while the per capita income of low- and middle-income economies almost tripled.
- 712 million people were still living in extreme poverty.
- Between 1995 and 2022, the share of low and middle-income economies in global trade grew from 21pc to 38pc.
- Typhoon Yagi severely damaged a large number of factories and flooded warehouses in northern Vietnam’s export-oriented industrial hubs, forcing plants to shut, with some expected to take weeks to resume full operations.
- India removed a floor price for basmati rice exports to help farmers struggling with debt and higher costs boost overseas sales of the premium grade just weeks ahead of the arrival of the new-season crop.
- New Delhi exports 4 million to 5 million metric tons of basmati to countries such as Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, UAE and United States.
- India is considering easing curbs on non-basmati rice exports.
- India allowed exports of non-basmati white rice exports New Delhi set a floor price for non-basmati exports at \$490 per tonne.

## INTERNATIONAL AID / LOAN / INVESTMENT

- Chinese leader Xi Jinping pledged over \$50 billion in financing for Africa over the next three years, promising to deepen cooperation in infrastructure and trade with the continent.
- African leaders already secured a plethora of deals this week for greater cooperation in infrastructure, agriculture, mining, trade and energy.
- United States is committed to supporting Bangladesh’s inclusive economic growth, institution building and development and will provide an additional \$202 million of aid.
- Bangladesh last year sought a \$4.7 billion bailout from the IMF.

## INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (IFIs)

- Israel has become newest non-regional member of Asian Development Bank.
- Maldives says its financial troubles are “temporary” and the luxury tourist destination has no plans to seek an International Monetary Fund bailout after warnings of a possible sovereign default.

- World Bank announced that it delivered a record \$42.6 billion in climate change financing in the last financial year, up 10 per cent from a year earlier.
- Around 44pc of World Bank Group’s total financing of \$97bn had a climate financing component.

## **SOCIO – ECONOMICAL CONDITION**

- Bangladesh is urgently seeking \$5bn in financial aid from international lenders to stabilise its dwindling foreign exchange reserves and its central bank has raised key interest rates to tame soaring inflation.
- Global debt hit a record high of \$312 trillion at the end of the second quarter, driven by borrowing in the United States and China.
- Global debt rose by 2.1 trillion in the first half to \$312 trillion - a new high point after previous data was revised lower.
- While 783m people were affected by hunger and a third of humanity faced food insecurity, over one billion meals a day were wasted across all continents in 2022.
- In 2022, there were 1.05 billion tonnes of food waste generated, including inedible parts, amounting to 132 kilograms per capita and almost one-fifth of all food available to consumers.
- Toll of both food loss and waste on global economy is estimated at roughly \$1tr.
- Eurozone inflation fell to its lowest level in more than three years this month.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

- Highlighting that plastic pollution is a regional problem in South Asia, a newly released World Bank report blames six countries of region for facilitating transport of pollution across borders such as solid waste including plastics, industrial effluents, domestic waste water and microplastics through 20 major rivers.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE**

- The world saw record average temperatures in August for the second year running. July 2024 to be the hottest month on record.
- The 2024 northern summer saw highest global temperatures on record, beating 2023’s high and making this year likely Earth’s hottest ever recorded.
- During the past three months of 2024, the globe has experienced hottest June and August, the hottest day on record, and the hottest boreal summer on record.
- The average global temperature at the Earth’s surface was 16.82C in August.
- Generative artificial intelligence uses 30 times more energy than a traditional search engine.

- Within 30 years, sea levels will rise at least 15 centimetres on several Pacific island nations, regardless of what cuts are made to greenhouse gas emissions.
- Even under a best-case scenario — if global warming is limited to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels — sea levels will rise 23 centimetres (nine inches) by 2054.

## **CLIMATE DISASTERS**

- Severe flooding in west Africa has displaced nearly 950,000 people and disrupted children’s education at the start of school year.
- According to Nigerian government data, over 115,265 hectares of farmland have also been damaged, in a country with already high rates of food insecurity”.
- The death toll in Myanmar in the wake of Typhoon Yagi has climbed to 384, with 89 people missing.
- Nepal’s home ministry said 170 people had been killed across the country, with another 42 still missing.
- Vietnam suffered \$3.3 billion in economic losses as a result of deadly Typhoon Yagi, which swept across the country’s north earlier this month causing hundreds of fatalities.
- Yagi battered northern Vietnam, Laos, Thailand and Myanmar in early September, triggering floods and landslides that left more than 700 people dead.
- The storm caused at least 60 deaths in South Carolina, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia.

## **1 # AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES**

- 1,000 farming experts will be sent to China for training [1]
- Senate body concerned about low investment in agri research [1]
- Progress on uplift of agri sector reviewed [1]
- Aurangzeb says agriculture, IT key economic drivers [2]
- CM launches agri graduates internship [2]

### **1.1 # Farmers**

- Growers struggle amid severe losses [2]
- Cane growers paid over 99pc of their dues, minister tells PA [3]

### **1.2 # Water**

- Growers, civil society oppose proposed changes to Irsa act, demand withdrawal [3]
- Balochistan, Sindh unite against Irsa Act tweaks [3]
- Diamer-Bhasha dam termed crucial for water, food security [3]
- Ready to discuss India's concerns on Indus Waters Treaty, says FO [4]

## **2 # AGRICULTURAL INPUTS**

### **2.1 # Agricultural loan / Finances**

- BOP approves 280,000 Kissan Card applications: minister [4]
- 40,000 farmers to get Kissan cards across Punjab [4]
- FFC signs MoU with HBL to boost farmer financing [4]

### **2.2 # Agricultural Taxes**

- Farmers oppose proposed hike in tax on tractors [5]

### **2.3 # Fertilizer**

- Oil, fertiliser sales tumble in August [5]
- Fertiliser offtake presents gloomy outlook [5]

### **2.4 # Seed**

- Minister seeks proposals on marketing new seeds [6]
- Three new cotton varieties approved [6]
- 12 innovative crop varieties approved [7]
- Panel to unveil report on counterfeit seeds [7]
- NA body seeks harsher punishments for makers of fake seeds [8]

## **2.5 # Subsidies**

Vegetable farmers' groups Maryam announces subsidy on seeds, fertilizers and solarization

## **3 # AGRICULTURAL OUTPUTS**

### **3.1 # Cash Crop**

FAO to open office in Multan for cotton research [8]

Cotton production plunges 60pc [9]

Export of unutilised sugar quota: Cabinet ties extension to grower payment [9]

Steep fall casts doubt on cotton production data [9]

Major growers' bodies see PSMA ad as veiled threat to delay sugar cane's crushing in Sindh

### **3.2 # Food Crop**

Nuclear-derived agricultural practices to boost rice yield [11]

### **3.3 # Fruits & Vegetables**

Apricot festival held in GB's Shigar [11]

Govt plans off-season cultivation of onion, tomato [11]

## **4 # SUB – AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIONS**

'Blue economy will enhance exports' [12]

Promotion of tourism Stakeholders call for optimal utilisation of fisheries sector [12]

IFAD to fund farming, fishing projects in Sindh [12]

Murad to approach Centre for ban on import of harmful fishing net [13]

Country's 'biggest' pilot project for shrimp farming launched [14]

## **5 # TRADE**

Commodity exports swell to \$2.74bn [14]

Cabinet okays trade pact with Mercosur [15]

Jul-Aug exports up 14pc to \$5.05bn YoY [15]

Trade gap with Middle East widens 36pc [16]

Pakistan, China agree to explore ways to further enhance trade [16]

Pakistan, Russia sign MoU for cooperation in multiple sectors [16]

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## 1 # AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES

### ***1,000 farming experts will be sent to China for training***

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal said that 1,000 farming experts will be sent to China for training in agricultural sector. The minister said that \$11 million would be spent on their training. The minister said this step will lay the foundation of “green revolution” in the country as they will learn the modern methods of agriculture in China. Iqbal said unfortunately, Pakistan imported agricultural products of around 10 billion dollars annually due to low yield per acre. (*Business Recorder, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***Senate body concerned about low investment in agri research***

The Senate Standing Committee on National Food Security and Research has expressed its concern at low investment in research and development in the agriculture sector. During a visit to the National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC) in Islamabad, members of the committee discussed the current level of research in various spheres of agriculture with scientists of NARC, and observed that Pakistan was allocating only 0.12 pc of its agricultural GDP on R&D, which was lowest among regional countries.

Financial updates since 2013 highlighted a research budget increase to Rs300 million in the fiscal year 2022-23. The committee also reviewed research achievements, including advancements in plant genetic resources and the development and release of new varieties and hybrids. At NARC, experimental farm area of about 1400 acres is being fully utilised to undertake research on more than 120 commodities. At least 98 laboratories are adequately equipped with qualified manpower in every sub-sector of agriculture. (*Dawn, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***Progress on uplift of agri sector reviewed***

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif said they are introducing Kissan Cards, Agricultural Mall Pilot Project, Green Tractor Scheme, Agriculture Graduates Internship and Tube Well Solarisation projects for the development of agriculture and socio-economic uplift of farmers in Punjab. While chairing a review meeting of the Agriculture department, to discuss progress on CM Initiatives for the uplift of agriculture sector in the province, the CM said, “Delivery of 40,000 Kissan Cards to the farmers through 136 agriculture centres in the province has started.

Farmers can get Kissan Cards from agricultural center in the agriculture office in each tehsil. They will be able to use these cards to buy agricultural inputs for wheat crop after 15th October. 0.5 million farmers will benefit from Kissan Cards. A farmer will be able to get a loan from Rs 30,000 per acre to Rs 150,000 through Kissan Card.” The CM said, “Agricultural Mall Pilot Project will be started in Okara, Bahawalpur, Sahiwal and Sargodha. Seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, agricultural goods, counselling, loans and other

facilities will be available at these malls.” Maryam approved Fresh Agriculture Graduates Internship Programme, under which training of 1000 agriculture graduates will start across Punjab from next week. These agriculture graduates will access the farmers through geo mapping and will advise them in the field on how to get good harvest. Under the CM Green Tractor Scheme, 10,000 tractors will be given in a year. Punjab government will give a subsidy of Rs10 lakh on each tractor. Punjab government will pay 50% on solarisation of electric and diesel tube wells.” (*Business Recorder, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***Aurangzeb says agriculture, IT key economic drivers***

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb has said that agriculture and information technology are the backbone of our economy and the real levers of economic growth of the country. Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb welcomed the initiative and highlighted the role of agriculture in Pakistan’s economy, particularly its contribution to the GDP of the country. He noted that while Pakistan’s economy during FY2024 grew by 2.38 per cent, agriculture emerged as a main driver of economic growth, registering an impressive growth of 6.25 per cent due to double-digit growth in output of major crops. (*Business Recorder, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***CM launches agri graduates internship***

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif launched a ‘historic’ agriculture graduate internship programme which will engage 1,000 graduates at Rs60,000 per month stipend. She distributed hiring letters among the graduates at a ceremony held at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad. She said 50,000 farmers have been delivered Kissan cards which will be activated from Oct 15. (*Dawn, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

## **1.1 # Farmers**

### ***Growers struggle amid severe losses***

Growers have condemned what they describe as extremely low returns on farm produce amid an unprecedented surge in production costs. Farmers are experiencing one of the steepest declines in income in history, making farming economically unviable for 90 per cent of the country’s subsistence cultivators. In recent years, the farming community has been squeezed between skyrocketing production costs and extremely low returns.

Farmers have faced up to 53 pc losses since April 2024 compared to the previous year’s rates. Representatives from various growers’ bodies claimed that cumulative losses from the sale of various crops have surged to Rs 1,000 billion. The soaring prices of crop inputs and electricity tariffs have rendered farming unviable, particularly for small landholders who make up around 7.47 million of the total 8.3 million farming community. Cotton farmers are receiving just Rs6,000 per maund (40 kg) for seed cotton, compared to last year’s price of Rs 8,500 -- a 29 per cent decline. Rice paddy growers are facing a 53 per cent loss this year, with prices offered at Rs1,700 per maund for hybrid varieties compared to last year’s rate of Rs3,600 per maund. Sesame growers

are experiencing even steeper losses, selling their produce for Rs11,000 per maund against last year's price of Rs20,000, indicating a 45 per cent loss. Maize prices also dropped from Rs2,700 per maund to Rs2,100 per maund in Spring 2024, reflecting a 22 per cent loss from the previous year. The failure to procure wheat at the Rs3,900 per 40 kg support price, coupled with unnecessary wheat imports despite a forecasted record domestic production, has severely impacted farmers. The price of urea has increased by 28 per cent, from Rs 3,500 per bag in 2023 to Rs4,500 per bag in 2024, and should be fixed at Rs3,000. (*The News, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 17*)

### ***Cane growers paid over 99pc of their dues, minister tells PA***

The Punjab Assembly was told that 99.34 per cent of the payment of sugarcane dues has been made to the growers. Parliamentary Secretary for Food Malik Waheed, told the house that of the total Rs497bn outstanding dues of farmers, the mills have paid Rs494bn (99.34pc). The secretary also told the house that the government would not procure wheat provided it had sufficient stocks of grain in its storage, but made it clear that there was no plan to dissolve the food department, whose main function so far had been procurement of wheat during the season and then providing it to the flour mills throughout the year on the basis of quota. (*Dawn, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

## **1.2 # Water**

### ***Growers, civil society oppose proposed changes to Irsa act, demand withdrawal***

The Sindh Abadgar Ittehad (SAI) and civil society leaders in Thatta opposed proposed amendments to the Indus River System Authority Act 1992 and called for their immediate withdrawal. They said the Water Apportionment Accord 1991 was signed after serious issues cropped up involving the federating units. They added that Sindh had already been criticising water distribution under that accord, but now the Irsa act 1992 was being amended. They said that such amendments would deprive the provinces of their rights and on contrary, prime minister would be empowered. They maintained that it was being done to ensure water availability for the corporate farming initiative and decisions could be taken to that effect. (*Dawn, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Balochistan, Sindh unite against Irsa Act tweaks***

Irrigation ministers of Balochistan and Sindh rejected federal government's proposed amendments to Indus River System Authority (Irsa) Act, asserting that any such move would violate 18th constitutional amendment. The amendments to the law governing inter-provincial water distribution, yet to be tabled by the government in parliament, have created a rift between two key allies — the PML-N and PPP — for the second time since the Feb 8 general elections. (*Dawn, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***Diamer-Bhasha dam termed crucial for water, food security***

Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal has directed all relevant departments to prioritise the completion of Diamer-Bhasha dam project and avoid further delays to ensure Pakistan's water and food security. An official announcement said that Diamer-Bhasha dam is a

crucial project for the country's water and food security and must be completed expeditiously in the national interest. The minister said that until 2018, the estimated construction cost of the dam was Rs479bn, and Rs120bn had already been spent on land acquisition. (*Dawn, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Ready to discuss India's concerns on Indus Waters Treaty, says FO***

Pakistan has expressed willingness to discuss issues concerning the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) with India. Weeks after India formally notified Pakistan to amend the bilateral treaty due to "fundamental and unforeseen changes in circumstances," the Foreign Office said that all discussions could take place within the treaty's existing framework. (*Dawn, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

## **2 # AGRICULTURAL INPUTS**

### **2.1 # Agricultural loan / Finances**

#### ***BOP approves 280,000 Kissan Card applications: minister***

"The Bank of Punjab (BOP) after scrutiny has approved 280,000 applications of farmers to obtain "Chief Minister's Kissan Card" which will enable them to buy inputs for their crops. The Punjab Agriculture Department had registered 800,000 farmers across the province for this scheme". Punjab Minister for Agriculture Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani while giving instructions said that this Kissan Card will be operational for agricultural intervention of wheat purchase. He further said that farmers will be able to purchase seeds, fertilizers and other agricultural inputs from 2,160 registered dealers across the province with Kissan Card. Regular monitoring of the purchase process will also be possible with these Kissan Cards.

While reviewing the progress related to the green tractor scheme, the minister said that 9,500 tractors will be provided to the farmers under the Chief Minister Punjab Green Tractor Scheme across the province and the Punjab government should provide a subsidy of Rs 9 billion 50 crore in this regard. A digital balloting will be conducted for these tractors in a transparent manner in proportion to the district quota. (*Business Recorder, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

#### ***40,000 farmers to get Kissan cards across Punjab***

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz said that delivery of 40,000 Kissan cards to farmers through 136 agriculture centres in the province has begun. She was presiding over an agriculture department's meeting that reviewed progress on the initiatives taken by her government for the uplift of agriculture sector in the province. 500,000 farmers would benefit from Kissan Card scheme. "A farmer will be able to get a loan from Rs 30,000 per acre to Rs1.5 lakh through Kissan Card". (*Dawn, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

#### ***FFC signs MoU with HBL to boost farmer financing***

Fauji Fertilizer Company, a key contributor to national growth, has partnered with Habib Bank Limited to promote agricultural financing in Pakistan. The MoU was signed



at FFC's Head Office on 9th September 2024. This partnership aims to enhance credit accessibility for farmers and provide tailored financial solutions to meet their needs. This initiative strengthens FFC's commitment to fostering agricultural development and improving farmers' livelihoods across Pakistan. HBL's involvement highlights a shared vision of promoting sustainable agricultural growth by expanding financial access and boosting productivity. (*Business Recorder, September 14<sup>th</sup> 2024, Page 5*)

## **2.2 # Agricultural Taxes**

### ***Farmers oppose proposed hike in tax on tractors***

Farmers and agriculturists have asked government not to implement a proposal seeking increase in sales tax on tractors from 10 to 18 per cent, claiming that it may lead to a serious blow to mechanisation of the agriculture sector. Nabi Bux Sathio, senior vice president of the Sindh Chamber of Agriculture, Hyderabad, has written a letter to the FBR chairman, demanding a reduction in taxes on tractors as it would support the agriculture sector and promote indigenisation of other farm machinery. Mr Sathio also demanded reduction in the import duty and sales tax on imported tractors and continuation of existing sales tax rate on locally-manufactured tractors.

The letter said that the agricultural sector plays a key role in the country's economy, contributing 24 per cent to the gross domestic product and employing 37.4pc of the total workforce. However, the sector is currently grappling with a myriad of complex issues. These issues include lack of investment and support, the adverse effects of climate change, and the dwindling availability of water, exacerbating the challenges faced by farmers and agriculturists. (*Dawn, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

## **2.3 # Fertilizer**

### ***Oil, fertiliser sales tumble in August***

Urea sales in August tumbled 14pc to 560,000 tonnes in August compared to 650,000 tonnes in the same month last year, while it came down 9pc MoM due to monsoon season. Urea sales fell 4pc to 4.2m tonnes in 8M2024 from 4.4m tonnes in 2023. Closing inventory of urea was around 397,000 tonnes in August, down from 399,000 in July. According to Tanweer Ahmed of Topline Securities, total DAP sales during August were around 80,000 tonnes, down 29pc YoY and 51pc MoM. This takes 8M2024 DAP sales to 787,000 tonnes, down 12pc YoY. (*Dawn, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Fertiliser offtake presents gloomy outlook***

Multiple factors have hampered fertiliser offtake in the country, and it is feared that this trend will continue until the end of the calendar year. The domestic agriculture sector has experienced considerable upheaval during this period, particularly due to the wheat marketing crisis and low selling prices for maize, cotton, paddy and sesame, which have adversely affected farmers' financial situations. Consequently, fertiliser offtake stagnated during the early months of the year, and its usage is now declining compared to last year's trend. Inclement weather has also led to a reduced application of fertilizers.

Dull demand has been blamed for the lower urea offtake in August 2024. It is estimated that the utilization of farm nutrients stood close to 554,000 tonnes, down 14 per cent year-on-year (YoY). On a sequential basis, sales volume is likely to decline by 9.0 per cent month-on-month (MoM). Cumulatively, urea offtake during 8MCY24 is projected to reach 4.2 million tonnes, down 4.0 per cent YoY, according to JS Research. The situation for di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) is even bleaker. The sales volume of DAP has been assessed at around 80,000 tonnes for the month, down 70 per cent YoY. On a sequential basis, DAP volume is poised to decline by 51 per cent MoM. DAP offtake during the first eight months of 2024 is expected to hover around 792,000 tonnes, down 11 per cent over the same period last year.

A report indicates that global fertiliser prices have remained relatively stable throughout the period. By the end of June 2024, urea prices were recorded at \$319 per tonne, equivalent to Rs5,962 per bag, an increase from \$260 per tonne, which equated to Rs3,706 per bag at the end of June 2023. The fertiliser industry continues to ensure that local farmers benefit from the lower prices of domestically produced urea, which was priced at Rs4,649 per bag as of June 30, 2024, reflecting a 22 per cent discount compared to international prices. (*The News, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, Page 17*)

## **2.4 # Seed**

### ***Minister seeks proposals on marketing new seeds***

Punjab Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Syed Ashiq Hussain has directed all the stakeholders to submit viable proposals for marketing new types of seeds to increase production of crops and increasing cotton production through biotechnology. He said proposals filed in this regard by stakeholders will be reviewed by the experts and sent to the Punjab chief minister for approval. The minister maintained that due to climate change and lack of modern seed technology, production of cotton crops is decreasing. There is a need to bring modern, high-yielding seeds of cotton, maize and other important crops to the doorsteps of farmers so that production targets can be achieved.

The minister said the innovation of seeds with modern productivity of crops and immunity against diseases is the need of the hour. In this regard, research institutions, academia and other relevant stakeholders should work together. He said the government has increased the development budget of agriculture by 250 percent this year so that priority measures are taken for the prosperity of farmers. A new era of agricultural development is beginning in the province thanks to the farmer-friendly initiatives of the Chief Minister, Punjab, such as Kissan Card, Green Tractor Scheme, Solarization of Tube Wells and Agricultural Malls. (*Business Recorder, September 10<sup>th</sup>, Page 4*)

### ***Three new cotton varieties approved***

The 36th meeting of the Sindh Seed Council approved three cotton varieties for general cultivation. These varieties have been developed by Central Cotton Research Institute (CCRI) Sakrand, a subsidiary of Pakistan Central Cotton Committee (PCCC) Multan.

The approved varieties include one non-BT (CRIS 644) and two BT varieties (CRIS 674 and CRIS 682). CCRI claims that these varieties have high-quality fiber are heat tolerant with higher yield. The council's meeting, held in Karachi after four years, brought together agricultural experts, cotton specialists, breeders, progressive farmers, and representatives from public and private institutions. The meeting discussed new cotton, wheat, maize and rice varieties and deferred approval of some varieties pending further experimentation. (*Dawn, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***12 innovative crop varieties approved***

In a significant development towards boosting agricultural productivity, the Sindh government has approved 12 innovative varieties of cotton, wheat, mustard, ber and other crops developed by the province's leading agricultural scientists. These varieties were introduced during the 36th pivotal meeting of Sindh Seed Council. The council approved key varieties, such as CRS 644, CRS 674, CRS 682, the latest BT 2021 and Mian Resham non-BT cotton, as well as IV-3, Urooj 22, Akbar 19, Subhani 21, and a new pasta wheat. It also approved Mustard, Kizola and Lemai Golo Ber varieties. Farmers' representatives at meeting expressed their serious concern over substandard rice seeds coming from Punjab, saying that this segment had suffered losses to the tune of millions of rupees on account of it. (*Dawn, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Panel to unveil report on counterfeit seeds***

The Ministry of National Food Security and Research has informed a parliamentary committee that inquiry commission investigating the sale of counterfeit seeds will share its findings next week. Discussing the counterfeit seeds sale nationwide, the National Assembly's Standing Committee on National Food Security and Research warned that this practice would drastically affect agricultural output and food security. The committee's chairman asked secretary of national food security to provide the findings report, which would be thoroughly examined by the sub-committee headed by MNA Rana Muhammad Hayat. The ministry was also requested to furnish a detailed report on seed certification process, including information on number of registered companies, the volume of seeds these companies are permitted to import, and other pertinent details.

The secretary briefed the committee on the Seed (Amendment) Bill 2024. It was informed that the Seed Act of 1976 and its subsequent amendment in 2015 were enacted following resolutions from the provincial assemblies and approvals as required by Article 144 of the Constitution. The committee reached a unanimous decision, directing the ministry to send a letter to the provinces, requesting their feedback within 10 days, considering that agriculture is a provincial matter after the 18th Amendment and is not included in Federal Legislative List. The committee believed effective implementation of this legislation would require prior consultation with the provinces.

The committee further explored the Seed (Amendment) Bill 2024, considering the input and concerns of the ministry and its affiliated departments. The ministry suggested that

the food minister head the National Seed Development and Regulatory Authority. It also proposed that the authority include provincial ministers, in addition to the secretaries. Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) advised that the authority's role should be limited to regulatory functions and not include development tasks, as managing both roles within a single entity could be ineffective. Furthermore, PARC recommended that the chairman of the authority ideally hold a PhD in agriculture or a related field and has at least 20 years of experience. It emphasised that breeding is a research-based work best managed by the experts within the relevant departments. (*Dawn, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***NA body seeks harsher punishments for makers of fake seeds***

The National Assembly Standing Committee on National Food Security and Research has emphasised the need for stringent legal action against sellers of counterfeit seeds, recommending both fines and imprisonment. At a meeting the body recommended that the maximum imprisonment for this offence be extended to two years, and fines raised to Rs2m. The ministry updated the committee on the progress of a Special Inquiry Commission probe into the sale of counterfeit seeds, saying that a final report was expected within the next couple of days. Additionally, Department of Plant Protection was instructed to collaborate with SIFC for enhancing locust control operations and to report back on short-term overhaul strategies. (*Dawn, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

## **2.5 # Subsidies**

### ***Vegetable farmers' groups Maryam announces subsidy on seeds, fertilizers and solarization***

Vegetable farmer groups consisting of 5 to 10 farmers will be given subsidy on seeds, fertilizers, drip irrigation and solarization," said Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif . By launching a project for the cultivation of onion and tomato on 2000 acres, the local availability of onion and tomato will be ensured. Due to off-season cultivation, there will be no artificial inflation as onion and tomato will be available locally in Punjab for 6 months." (*Business Recorder, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

## **3 # AGRICULTURAL OUTPUTS**

### **3.1 # Cash Crop**

#### ***FAO to open office in Multan for cotton research***

The Pakistan Central Cotton Committee (PCCC) and FAO have joined hands for cotton research and sustainability in country and for the purpose a regional office of the FAO is being established at the PCCC head office in Multan. The partnership is set to focus on developing and implementing climate-resilient agricultural practices, enhancing cotton research and development, promoting agricultural innovation and technology transfer, and strengthening capacity-building and training programmes. A new regional FAO office will serve as a hub for joint initiatives and projects as well as facilitating collaboration and knowledge sharing, fostering an environment conducive for innovation & development in agriculture sector. (*Dawn, September 2nd, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***Cotton production plunges 60pc***

A staggering fall of up to 60 per cent in the production of cotton both in Punjab and Sindh by Aug 31 has rung alarm bells in the textile sector, which is forced to meet its lint requirements from the foreign markets at the cost of precious foreign exchange. A difference of over 0.3 million bales in the crop figures released by Punjab's Crop Reporting Service (CRS) and Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA) confuses the industry about its future procurement strategy. Data shared by PCGA showed that around 1.226m bales reached ginning factories across the country by Aug 31, registering a steep decline of 60pc compared to 3.04m bales produced in the same period last year.

This significant shortfall in the cotton output is being attributed to various issues. These included a decline in the early sowing trend, prolonged heatwave during June and July leading to fruit shedding, heavy rains in August, whitefly and pink bollworm attacks, shrinking crop acreage, no announcement of intervention price by government, cotton market manipulation by vested interest, decreasing crop profitability, and a lack of government support for research and development.

PCGA report says that Sindh has produced 0.773m bales this year against last year's 1.972m bales for the same period, a drop of 61pc in the production. Likewise, Punjab registered a 58pc fall as only 0.453m bales reached the gates of ginning factories against last year's 1.068m bales. Punjab CRS claims that province has harvested 0.759m bales, over 30pc less than previous year's production. (*Dawn, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Export of unutilised sugar quota: Cabinet ties extension to grower payment***

The federal cabinet has decided that 15 days' extension in export of unutilized quota is not for those sugar mills which have failed to use export proceeds to pay to growers. On September 3, 2024, in the context of its earlier decision of June 25, 2024 submitted by the Ministry of Industries and Production, regarding the export of 150,000 MT of sugar, the cabinet clarified that on request of Ministry of Industries and Production it extended the time period for export of sugar by two weeks in the following manner with the direction that all other terms and conditions stipulated in the decision of Cabinet of June 25, 2024 shall continue to apply. (*Business Recorder, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Steep fall casts doubt on cotton production data***

An abnormal decline in domestic cotton production and abysmal performance of ginning factories make the fortnightly data, released by the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA) doubtful. The PCGA says that as of Sept 15, the total phutti arrival at ginning units was 1,434,028 bales, a significant decrease of 63.55 per cent compared to the 3,933,846 bales recorded during the same date last season. It reports that only 302 ginning units are operating against 614 units last year. An insider says that ginning units report an average of preparing 45 bales per day against the normal working of 100 bales daily. This means that a large quantity of lint is going undocumented to avoid the payment of higher taxes imposed by the government this year.

Domestic cotton production is projected to be only 6.5-7.0 million bales this season, significantly below the national requirements. In Punjab, cotton production touched 538,686 bales in contrast to 1,544,634 bales produced by this date last year, indicating a 65.13pc decline. In Sindh, 895,342 bales have been produced this year, compared to 2,389,212 bales during the same period last year, reflecting a 62.5pc fall in production. In Balochistan, the total cotton production for the year stands at 34,900 bales. The significant fall in domestic cotton production may be attributed to several key factors, including climate change, extreme heat and drought, heavy rains and pest infestations. These challenges have pushed production costs beyond the reach of many farmers, while climate-resilient cotton varieties capable of yielding optimally under such harsh conditions have yet to be developed. (*Dawn, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Major growers' bodies see PSMA ad as veiled threat to delay sugar cane's crushing in Sindh***

The province's major grower organisations see Pakistan Sugar Mills Association's advertisement as a veiled threat by the millers to delay sugar cane's crushing season as well payment of support price to cane producers. The advertisement, published widely in major newspapers, cautions that unless export of sugar carryover stocks is allowed sugar industry will not be in a position to commence upcoming crushing season and pay support price to farmers until a similar support is extended to sugar prices.

In 2023-24, 36 mills – out of 38 in all - had crushed sugar cane in Sindh to produce 20,22,780.929 tonnes of sweetener. A total of 19,279,206.410 tonnes of sugar cane was crushed with 10.370pc recovery percentage. When compared with of FY2022-23, 16,789,161.093 tonnes of sugar cane was crushed and 1744,808.150 tonnes of sugar was produced with lesser sucrose recovery percentage of 10.1574pc. Till Sept 1, sugar stock of 826,502 tonnes was available in the country which was sufficient to last until Feb 15, 2025. "Roughly, 150 tonnes sugar per month is consumed in Sindh". (*Dawn, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

## **3.2 # Food Crop**

### ***Nuclear-derived agricultural practices to boost rice yield***

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations have trained farmers from Punjab and Sindh to employ nuclear-derived climate-smart agricultural practices to optimise rice productivity. The perfect mix of combining chemical and organic fertilizer for local soil and crops, known as the 'IAEA/FAO Integrated Option' led to their basmati yield increasing by 188 per cent, while long grain rice increased by 17 per cent in field trials conducted in six regions of Sindh, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. By increasing rice production, farmers enhance food supply and security in their region while promoting sustainable farming practices that can be replicated by other countries.

Pakistani farmers were among the farmers in six Asian countries who received training on nuclear and isotopic techniques under the IAEA's technical cooperation programme. Farmers from Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Vietnam saw particular success with rice production increased from 1 to 2.5 tonnes per hectare. Groups of farmers in 11 countries across Asia have been using climate-smart agricultural practices following training on nuclear and isotopic techniques, under the IAEA's technical cooperation programme. Farmers from these six countries used nuclear derived climate smart agricultural practices and significantly increased their rice yields, with the help of IAEA and FAO to achieve sustainable rice production and food security in the region.

Rice is a food staple for 60 per cent of the Asian continent, with about 90pc of the global rice crop grown and consumed in Asia. Rice farming in the region uses over 135 million hectares and directly employs more than 300 million people in its cultivation and production. The shortages in water and the impacts of climate change have created a deficit in rice production. Increasing rice production in the region is important to ensure food security, meet the demands of a growing population and improve farmers' livelihoods. IAEA says scientists from Joint FAO/IAEA Centre of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture have made endeavours to harness nuclear techniques to optimise fertilizer and water use, thereby increasing the efficiency of agricultural production while maintaining soil health. (*Dawn, September 2nd, 2024, Page 3*)

### **3.3 # Fruits & Vegetables**

#### ***Apricot festival held in GB's Shigar***

To promote local products and provide opportunities for farmers and entrepreneurs to promote organic products for the international market, Apricot Festival was organised in the Shigar district of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). (*Dawn, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

#### ***Govt plans off-season cultivation of onion, tomato***

The Punjab government has decided to launch a project for the off-season provision of onion and tomatoes to check hike in their prices. For the purpose, four stations have been selected for onion and tomatoes each where groups of growers will be formed for the provision of subsidised farm inputs to encourage them to join the off-season vegetables project encompassing 2,000 acres. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif gave her nod for the project at a special meeting. She was briefed by the agriculture authorities that Khushab, Chakwal, Rawalpindi and Jhelum districts had been selected for the off-season cultivation of onions, while tomatoes would be grown in Kahrur Pakka, Rahim Yar Khan, Vehari and Rajanpur districts. The two crops will be grown at least on 2,000 acres in the first phase.

She was told that groups of vegetable growers consisting of five to 10 farmers would be offered subsidy on seeds, fertilizers, drip irrigation and solarisation as incentives to join the project for transforming agriculture in Punjab and ensuring availability of onion and tomatoes during the offseason in the local markets and thus checking artificial hike

in the rates of the two vegetables. The chief minister also approved a plan to start agricultural machinery rental services across the province for the convenience of farmers. She said this would help the small landholders with meagre resources to mechanise their farming through rented tractors, harvesters and other modern agricultural machinery on a no-profit, no-loss basis. A joint working group was formed for the selection of more than 67 locations and agricultural machinery to be offered on rent. She also directed the authorities concerned to ensure sowing of wheat on government land. (*Dawn, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

#### **4 # SUB – AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIONS**

##### ***‘Blue economy will enhance exports’***

Discussing about Pakistan’s blue economy & maritime, unfortunately this area has not been addressed in the past. Like agriculture, manufacturing industry, mineral / mining, Information Technology this sector has to be given ‘Priority’ for boosting the economy and especially the exports, said Ateeq ur Rehman (economic & financial analyst). With this, blue economy and the maritime education not only to the students but also to the relevant maritime sector is very important and significant.

Significant work has been done on it but it requires more collaboration from multilateral and bilateral investors as Foreign Direct Investment. As a part of our Foreign Trade and in order to achieve tremendous growth of Exports we have to increase our share in the Global Blue Economy especially by Fisheries / Sea Food. We have a big Coast line but our Fish Resources are declining in the marine areas of Pakistan. In reality more than 80% of fish stock has already been lost the necessity of sustainable practices to prevent over-fishing and potential to ensure recovery of fish stocks needed. (*Business Recorder, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

##### ***Promotion of tourism Stakeholders call for optimal utilisation of fisheries sector***

The stakeholders of the fisheries’ sector including fish farmers and people of the tourists’ attractive areas have called for the utilization of the potential fisheries sector for the promotion of tourism in the province and tourists’ destinations. Recreational fishing is a major tourism activity and is integral part to the “Blue economy”. Despite having low importance and small rates of participation in our economy but still it being an important economic activity, especially in coastal, and riverine areas, there is relatively little research on its various tourism dimensions, including its role in branding and marketing in Pakistan. (*Business Recorder, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

##### ***IFAD to fund farming, fishing projects in Sindh***

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) will launch an initiative next year to support farming and fishing in Sindh to provide a sustainable livelihood in areas extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The hybrid intervention project named ‘Sindh Coastal Resilience Project’ will be launched in 2025 in around



seven of the poorest talukas in three districts and as many as three union councils in Badin, Sujawal, and Thatta.

The areas have a combined population of 3.87 million, which are recognised as the most deprived and under-developed, with a multidimensional poverty headcount — an index that captures severe deprivations with respect to education, health and standard of living — of 84 per cent. Only 1pc households in the target area own agricultural land, and 84pc of the landowners own less than two acres. The socioeconomic situation of each of the three districts is quite similar. Population area is predominantly rural (78 to 89pc), and majority — 82 to 86pc — of population lives under multidimensional poverty.

Fishing and agriculture are the common sources of livelihood there, but the large majority of the population is landless or owns small landholdings. The majority of fishermen work as hired hands on boats owned by others. The three districts are also affected by ecosystem degradation and are particularly vulnerable to climate change. The target districts are mostly agrarian, with farming, fishing and rearing livestock being the major occupations. There are two crop seasons, rabi and kharif, with rice, sugarcane, cotton, and vegetables being the major crops.

The project aims to promote inclusive and resilient livelihoods for target farming and fishing communities and disadvantaged groups. The initiative is expected to benefit around 20,000 households in a phased manner through interventions spanning over the seven years of the project implementation. The goals will be achieved through improved production under climate-smart agriculture and fisheries production plans based on value chain development that facilitates integration with markets and services.

The project will have a total cost of \$163.5m. The IFAD will provide a loan of \$60m, and the Sindh government will contribute \$6.7m to cover the project's operational costs. IFAD will plug a financing gap of \$40m under its other programme. According to the development organisation, the project will be closely aligned with the Asian Development Bank's infrastructure investments. (*Dawn, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Murad to approach Centre for ban on import of harmful fishing net***

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that he would approach the federal government for imposing a ban on the import of a destructive type of fishing nets, known as Gujo-Bulo. He said this during his meeting with a delegation of Balochistan fisheries department led by its parliamentary secretary Barkat Rind. The two sides discussed collaborative projects aimed at boosting the fisheries sector to improve the livelihood of local fishermen. The fisheries officials from both the provinces highlighted that the use of Gujo-Bulo fishing nets for catching fish was destroying fish seedlings, depleting fish stocks, and leaving fishermen unemployed. They emphasised the need for appropriate measures to stop the import of those fishing nets. The CM decided that the fisheries departments of both the provinces should enhance coordination so that the export of seafood could be increased. (*Dawn, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 14*)

### ***Country's 'biggest' pilot project for shrimp farming launched***

The first production of Punjab government's "biggest" pilot project of shrimp farming in Pakistan will be ready next month with Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz hoping \$1 billion foreign exchange annually through its export. The pilot project has been launched at Jhalarin North, a suburban area of Muzaffargarh. The CM also set a target of shrimp farming on 100,000 acres across Punjab, saying the quality of shrimp was that of international standards to meet the export requirement. Currently, there are more than 6,800 private fish farms span over an area of 86,000 acres across the province. "This surge in aquaculture is not only a response to the growing demand for seafood but also an opportunity to utilize the region's underexploited land."

In Punjab, over 9 million acres of land remains saline and brackish, barren and non-productive. "By developing shrimp farming on these marginal lands, we can transform unproductive areas into thriving ecosystems that contribute to local economies, enhance food security, and promote sustainable agricultural practices," and added the production of high-value white leg shrimp (*Litopenaeus vannamei*) in saline and brackish waters has emerged as a successful and established industry in several countries, including Ecuador, China, India, Thailand and Vietnam. (*Dawn, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

## **5 # TRADE**

### ***Commodity exports swell to \$2.74bn***

Merchandise exports increased nearly 16 per cent to \$2.74 billion in August from \$2.36bn in the corresponding month last year, according to data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). The growth momentum picked pace in August owing to improved orders from the international community and stability in the exchange rate. In July, the exports grew 11.83pc. On a month-on-month basis, exports saw a hefty increase of 18.9pc in August from the preceding month. The export proceeds reached \$5.05bn in July-August FY25 from \$4.43bn over the last year, an increase of 14pc.

In FY24, Pakistan's merchandise exports rose 10.54pc to \$30.64bn from \$27.72bn in the preceding year. Exports increased steadily from July 2023 until they turned negative in January. This negative trend persisted until April. After a temporary setback, growth regained momentum in May and continued into June. The country witnessed its highest-ever exports in 2021-22, reaching a staggering \$31.78bn. However, following year saw a decline, with exports dropping to \$27.54bn. The surge negates exporter associations' claims about the potential negative impact of tax measures outlined in the budget 2024-25. They believe these steps could result in a decline in the country's export earnings.

### **Trade deficit**

According to the PBS data, imports grew 5.67pc to \$8.63bn in July-August FY25 from \$8.16bn over the last year. The imports declined 1.25pc in August to \$4.42bn from \$4.47bn in the same month last year. Month-on-month, imports increased 4.92pc. In

FY24, imports fell by 0.84pc to \$54.73bn compared to \$55.19bn in FY23. The trade deficit in July-August FY25 decelerated by 4.30pc to \$3.57bn from \$3.74bn over the last year. In August, the deficit narrowed by 20.54pc to \$1.67bn from \$2.11bn last year. The trade gap contracted to \$24.08bn in FY24 from \$27.47bn in the preceding year.

## **Rice exports**

Meanwhile, Commerce Minister Jam Kamal has asked the rice exporters to set an export target of \$5bn for the current fiscal year. In FY24, rice exports stood at \$4bn. As a result of the high contribution from rice exports, the overall agriculture exports in FY24 reached \$8bn. Pakistan could potentially reach a \$10 billion rice export target by 2030. (*Dawn, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

## ***Cabinet okays trade pact with Mercosur***

The federal cabinet gave ex post facto approval and endorsed the signing of the Trade Framework Agreement between Pakistan and Mercosur, a South American trade bloc comprising Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. Presiding over cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the South American market could be advantageous for Pakistani products as it has yet to be explored. He instructed the authorities concerned to swiftly pursue agreements and memorandums of understanding related to the economy which had been pending for long. (*Dawn, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

## ***Jul-Aug exports up 14pc to \$5.05bn YoY***

The country's exports increased by 14 percent during the first two months (July-August) of current fiscal year 2024-25 and stood at \$5.050 billion compared to \$4.430 billion during the same period of last fiscal year 2023-24. The trade data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) showed that trade deficit narrowed by 4.20 percent during the first two months of the current fiscal year and stood at \$3.578 billion compared to \$3.735 billion during the same period of last fiscal year. The country's imports increased by 5.67 percent and stood at \$8.628 billion during the first two months of the current fiscal year compared to \$8.165 billion during the same period of last fiscal year. Pakistan's trade deficit in August 2024 narrowed by 20.54 percent year-on-year (YoY) to \$1.675 billion as compared to a deficit of \$2.108 billion recorded in the same month last year, according to data released by PBS.

Exports registered 15.93 percent growth and stood at \$2.743 billion in August when compared to \$2.366 billion during the same month of last fiscal year. Imports registered 1.25 percent decline and stood at \$4.418 billion in August when compared to \$4.474 billion during the same month of last fiscal year. On monthly basis, trade deficit narrowed by 12.03 percent and stood at \$1.675 billion in August compared to a deficit of \$1.904 billion recorded in July 2024. Exports in August rose by 18.90 percent to \$2.743 billion compared to \$2.307 billion in July 2024. Imports increased by 4.92 percent in August 2024 and stood at \$4.418 billion compared to \$4.211 billion in July 2024. (*Business Recorder, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Trade gap with Middle East widens 36pc***

Pakistan trade imbalance with the Middle East widened 35.5 per cent to \$1.081 billion in the first month of 2024-25 from \$797.78 million over the same month last year owing to a rise in petroleum imports from the region. The trade gap narrowed significantly in FY24. Still, according to data compiled by the State Bank of Pakistan, the rising trade deficit with the region will concern policymakers. In FY24, the imbalance with the Middle East narrowed to \$13.014bn, a decline of 20.47pc from \$16.365bn over the preceding year. This was mainly due to lower petroleum imports from the region. Pakistan's exports to the Middle East rose 49.08pc to \$302.98m in July from \$203.22m over the same month last year.

In FY24, the exports to the region grew 35.23pc to \$3.155bn compared to \$2.33bn in the corresponding period last year. At the same time, Pakistan's imports from the Middle East also saw an increase of 38.26pc to \$1.384bn in July 2024 from \$1.001bn over the same month last year. In FY24, the imports declined 13.53pc to \$16.16bn compared to \$18.69bn in same period last year. (*Dawn, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Pakistan, China agree to explore ways to further enhance trade***

Jam Kamal Khan, Federal Minister for Commerce held a meeting with Chinese Vice Minister of Commerce, on sidelines of SCO Ministerial Conference. During meeting, both sides agreed to take steps to further explore ways to enhance trade and to convene a meeting of Committee on Trade in Goods of Free Trade Agreement. Both sides agreed that there is enormous potential for growth in agriculture sector. Chinese side desired its eagerness to import quality products from Pakistan. Chinese side invited Pakistan to participate in China International Import Exhibition, Shanghai this year and conveyed that the huge space has been reserved for Pakistan. (*Business Recorder, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***Pakistan, Russia sign MoU for cooperation in multiple sectors***

Pakistan and Russia formalised their commitment to deepening bilateral ties with the signing of a MoU for expanding cooperation across multiple sectors. The MoU builds on talks held between the two countries during delegation-level discussions at Pakistan's Foreign Office a day earlier, where both sides explored avenues for boosting trade and overcoming logistical hurdles in the face of international sanctions on Russia. A notable outcome of the discussions at the Foreign Office was Russia's offer to explore a free trade agreement between Pakistan and Eurasian Economic Union. (*Dawn, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***BD HC meets TDAP CE to enhance bilateral trade***

Md Ruhul Alam Siddique, High Commissioner of Republic of Bangladesh, called on Chief Executive, Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) at TDAP's office. HE Siddique expressed keen interest in increasing imports of agro-related items from Pakistan, particularly rice, maize, and sesame, as Bangladesh's agricultural imports have been significantly impacted due to ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. Bangladesh, currently reliant on India, sees this as an opportune time to strengthen trade ties with Pakistan & foster cordial relations. (*Business Recorder, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### ***Pakistan eyes direct trade route with Tajikistan***

Pakistan intends to establish a direct trade route with Tajikistan and gain road access to Central Asian countries by utilising the corridors of China and Afghanistan. For this purpose, Karakoram Highway, Khunjarab, Kashgar, Murghab and Dushanbe routes will be utilised for the two-way trade. (*Dawn, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

## **5.1 # Exports**

### ***Jam to take steps to enhance export of meat, poultry, seafood***

Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan held separate meetings with Council for Agriculture and Food Processing, and Council for Meat, Poultry, Fish, and Seafood Products, to discuss strategies for enhancing Pakistan's export potential in these sectors. During his meeting with the Council for Agriculture and Food Processing, the minister emphasized Pakistan's vast potential in exporting key agricultural products, such as onions, bananas, dates, citrus fruits, and mangoes. He noted that with a focused strategy and targeted facilitation, the export of these products could be doubled within next two to three years. He noted a record onion export of \$225m this year as a positive indicator of the country's export capabilities. (*Business Recorder, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***15-day extension given to sugar exporters***

The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has asked all banks to facilitate the sugar exports for another 15 days as per the federal cabinet's approval. "The federal cabinet has approved a 15-day extension in the 45 days already allowed for shipment of sugar export consignment," said a circular issued by the SBP. For other provinces, the extension period will commence from quota allocation date by Provincial Cane Commissioner, it said. For the unutilised export quota of sugar mills from Punjab, the 15-day extension is effective from the date of issuance of this cabinet decision. The above extension in the shipment period will not apply to sugar mills, which have failed to use export proceeds to clear outstanding dues to growers. (*Dawn, September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Ban on sugar export: PHC directs ECC, stakeholders to decide matter in two weeks***

Peshawar High Court directed Economic Coordination Committee and all other stakeholders to decide about ban on export of surplus sugar by KP government while keeping in view prevailing ground situation. (*The News, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***Agri exports to Japan: envoy urges traders to explore untapped market***

Speakers at the seminar urged the Pakistani business community to explore the untapped market of agricultural exports to Japan. They highlighted that Japanese consumers are known for their high standards and meticulous attention to product quality and health compliance. By adhering to these rigorous standards, businesses can tap into this lucrative market and meet the growing demand for high-quality agricultural products. The "Export to Japan Seminar" was organized by Pakistan Japan Business Forum (PJBF). (*Business Recorder, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 7*)

### ***Maryam bans export of raw pink salt***

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has said she will not allow the country's precious reserves be sold at a low rate. "Pink salt is like a treasure trove for Pakistan," she said while chairing a meeting to review proposals on getting maximum revenue from the export of pink salt. She directed the authorities concerned to prepare a plan for setting up value-added industry for the pink salt. "Ban the export of raw pink salt," she said. CM also sought a comprehensive plan on improvement in the export of pink salt. She ordered safety of mining workers, and considered a proposal to use modern technology for the extraction of minerals in Punjab. (*Dawn, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***Textile, clothing exports rebound in August***

Textile and clothing exports saw a significant rebound in August, recording nearly 13pc increase. The increase comes amid concerns that industry was facing a downturn. In July, exports from the sector had contracted by 3.1pc, leading many experts to worry that country's textile and clothing industry could struggle to remain competitive against regional rivals due to stringent taxation policies introduced for the current fiscal year.

June also saw a year-on-year decline of 0.93pc, though exports had rebounded strongly in May, growing by double digits after two months of slower performance. In absolute terms, textile and clothing exports surged to \$1.64bn in August, up from \$1.45bn in the same month last year. On a month-on-month basis, exports surged by 29.4pc. For the first two months (July and August) of ongoing fiscal year, textile and clothing exports increased by 5.4pc, reaching \$2.92bn, compared to \$2.76bn in same period a year ago.

On the import side, synthetic fibre imports saw a negative growth of 8.3pc, while synthetic and artificial silk yarn imports declined by 13.6pc. However, other textile-related imports grew by 51.5pc during the month. Raw cotton imports increased by 7.6pc and second-hand clothes imports posted a growth of 22pc. In total, the country's exports grew by 16.8pc in August, rising to \$2.76bn, up from \$2.36bn in the same month last year. (*Dawn, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Rice exports touched \$3.9bn in 2023-24***

Pakistan has, perhaps for the first time, touched the mark of \$3.89 billion in earnings from rice exports, which were made possible mainly due to favourable weather conditions, availability of farm inputs and an Indian ban on export of non-Basmati rice. Country exported over 5.8m tonnes of Basmati and non-Basmati varieties of rice during the year July 2023-June 2024 to earn \$3.89bn. (*Dawn, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Biopharma JV plans to double exports***

A leading biopharmaceutical manufacturing joint venture plans to double its exports in a phased manner after it succeeded in establishing a modern European standard plant designed in line with the guidelines of respective international regulatory authorities. Under certain export certifications, the JV also plans to obtain registrations for various global markets. (*Dawn, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Basmati price Rice export boom ends after India's move***

The period of a massive boost to Pakistan's rice exports is over after the Indian government's decision to remove the floor price of Basmati rice and relax restrictions on export of other rice varieties. Pakistan Rice Exporters Association (REAP) has approached the government and shared its concerns on the latest development in the international market after Indian government's decisions. Pakistani rice exporters sold Basmati rice at \$ 1300 per ton as compared to \$ 900 per ton, mainly due to the ban on export of Basmati rice by India and restrictions on other varieties. Pakistani rice exporters have also asked federal government to set a floor price or Minimum Export Price at \$ 900 per Metric Ton as rice exports will now be on the decline in days to come.

Pakistan's rice export rose to 619,939.29 MT during the first two months i.e. July-August of 2024-25 against 343,683.19 MT during the corresponding period of FY 2023-24, showing an increase of over 55 per cent. The exporters earned \$ 468.22 million dollars in the first two months of current fiscal year against \$ 236.73 million during the same period of FY 2023-24. (*Business Recorder, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***ECC grants conditional approval to sugar export to Tajikistan***

ECC of the Cabinet granted conditional approval for export of 40,000 metric tons of sugar to Tajikistan. (*Business Recorder, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***BFBIO seeks to double exports, local sales post-capacity expansion***

BF Biosciences Limited (BFBIO), Pakistan's first biopharmaceutical manufacturer plans to almost double its exports in the next few years mainly on the back of export certifications, and plans to obtain registrations for various global markets. (*Business Recorder, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### ***Pakistan removes floor price for rice exports***

Pakistan removed a floor price for rice exports, the country's commerce ministry said, following a similar move by neighbouring India. The Ministry of Commerce said in a written notification that the minimum export price for rice which was last set in November would be removed "effective immediately". Earlier this month, India removed a floor price for basmati rice exports to help farmers struggling with debt and higher costs boost overseas sales of the premium grade just weeks ahead of the arrival of the new-season crop. India and Pakistan, the only growers of basmati, both try to promote the premium grade of rice in a manner similar to French Champagne or Darjeeling tea. (*Business Recorder, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Minimum export price for rice withdrawn***

The Ministry of Commerce has withdrawn the minimum export price (MEP) for rice, a move expected to lead to a decrease in export value and increase under-invoicing during the current fiscal year. In November last year, the ministry had notified the MEP for several types of rice, leaving minimal margins for Dubai-based Indians to export

Pakistani rice under their trademarks. The apparent reason for that decision was the Indian government's ban on rice exports, while Dubai-based Indian exporters needed rice to supply to their buyers. The ministry has now issued a notification to revoke the November 2023 notification. The Indian government has relaxed its prohibition on rice exports, effective October 1. Rice exporter and commodities expert Shamsul Islam Khan told Dawn that the commerce ministry's sudden decision to withdraw the MEP will lead to a pricing war between Pakistan and India. He feared that Pakistan's rice export value will suffer as the country may not receive the true value of its rice exports. (*Dawn, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***REAP chairman hails removal of MEP cap***

With the removal of the Minimum Export Price, Pakistani rice traders can now export without price restrictions, enabling them to better compete with India in global market. Chairman Rice Exporters Association of Pakistan Chela Ram Kewlani has welcomed the government's decision, calling it a major milestone for the industry. This move will help to enhance Pakistan's competitiveness in the international rice market and boost the country's rice exports to record levels, he said. On September 27, 2024, the Ministry of Commerce officially removed the MEP on rice exports to provide relief to Pakistani traders and exporters. Previously, Pakistani exporters were required to sell rice in the international market at a minimum price, determined by the Ministry of Commerce in consultation with the REAP. (*Business Recorder, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

## **6 # CORPORATE SECTOR**

### ***Foreign food makers post robust earnings despite challenges***

Despite political instability and unprecedented energy and interest rates amid skyrocketing inflation, foreign food item manufacturers posted robust sales in the first half of 2024. While some consumers boycotted soft drinks and milk products from reputed foreign multinational companies (MNCs) in Pakistan to protest the killings of Palestinians in Gaza by Israeli forces since October 2023, the results suggest that consumers have not significantly boycotted locally produced food items made in joint ventures with foreign MNCs.

Friesland Campina Engro Pakistan's (FCEPL) revenue increased to Rs55 billion for the half year ending June 30, 2024, up from Rs47bn in the same period last year. However, its profit-after-tax declined by six per cent to Rs1.25bn from Rs1.32bn, primarily due to a substantial rise in interest rates. FCEPL's frozen dessert segment reported a revenue of Rs6.16bn, up by 13pc year-on-year. Its dairy-based segment reported a revenue of Rs48.87bn, reflecting a growth of 18pc over the same period in 2023.

Through the Finance Bill 2024, the government has introduced an 18pc sales tax on packaged milk, leading to a significant price hike. This increase will further strain consumers' already declining purchasing power. The tax disparity has widened the gap between packaged milk and untaxed, unregulated loose milk. Nestle Pakistan Ltd (NPL)



reported a 6.2pc increase in sales for the half year ended June 30, reaching Rs107.7bn over the same period last year. The company attributed the growth to broad-based brand expansion, supported by demand-generating activities and a favourable portfolio mix. However, its gross profit margin declined due to rising commodity and energy prices, while increased brand investments further impacted operating profit. Consequently, net profit decreased by 8.34pc to Rs10bn from Rs11bn.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited's (UPFL) net sales plunged by 9.3pc to Rs17bn during the six months ending June 30 from Rs18.7 in the same period last year, followed by a drop of 26.7pc in profit to Rs3.8bn from Rs5.2bn. Colgate Palmolive Pakistan Ltd posted a net turnover of Rs113bn in January-June against Rs119.6bn in the last fiscal year. Its profit-after-tax soared to Rs17bn from Rs10.4bn.

Ismail Industries Ltd recorded impressive sales of Rs131.3bn for the full fiscal year ended June 30 from Rs100.6bn during the previous fiscal year. However, its profit shrank to Rs4.9bn from Rs5.89bn. Fauji Foods Ltd posted a Rs337m profit after tax during the first half compared to a loss of Rs147m in the same period last year. Its sales rose 14.6pc to Rs11bn from Rs9.9bn. (*Dawn, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Rice millers` association warns members against paying electricity bills***

Sindh Balochistan Rice Millers and Traders Association decided to continue non-payment of the electricity bills of the mills. (*Dawn, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

## **7 # INTERNATIONAL AID / LOAN / INVESTMENT**

### ***Sindh govt providing several incentives for investment: Dharejo***

Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Jam Ikramullah Dharejo has said that the provincial government of Sindh is providing several incentives to domestic and international investors to invest in Sindh province. New industrial zones are also being established in the province. (*Business Recorder, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***Aurangzeb highlights opportunities to foreign investors***

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb asked foreign investors to explore fixed-income investment opportunities in the economy. During a meeting with a delegation of international investors, led by JP Morgan Pakistan CEO Amin Mohammad Khowaja, the minister highlighted the significant strides Pakistan has made in improving its macroeconomic indicators — including a 14% rise in exports, a fall in inflation to 9.6pc, and an overall decline in current account deficit. (*Dawn, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Jul-Aug FDI up 55.5pc to \$350.3m YoY***

The Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the country rose by 55.5 percent during the first two months of this fiscal year (FY25). The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported that Pakistan fetched FDI amounting to \$350.3 million during the first two months of this fiscal year against \$225.2 million in the corresponding period of last fiscal year (FY24), depicting an increase of \$125 million. During the period under review, FDI inflows

were \$495 million against the \$144.5 million outflows. MoM basis, statistics are also encouraging as FDI surged to \$ 214 million in August 2024 versus \$ 142 million in August 2023. The second component of foreign investment i.e. portfolio investment also posted an upward trend and surged by 8.1 percent during the first two month of this fiscal year. Portfolio investment stood at \$24.7 million in July-Aug of FY25 as against the investment of \$ 22.8 million in the same period of last fiscal year (FY24). Total foreign investment in Pakistan, comprising FDI, portfolio investment and foreign public investment registered a growth of 80 percent or \$ 201 million to reach \$453.2 million in July-Aug of FY25 up from \$252 million in the same period of FY24. The country is striving for healthy foreign inflows to fulfill the external debt obligations and build the sliding foreign exchange reserves. (*Business Recorder, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Foreign investors: Jul-Aug profit repatriation jumps 459pc YoY***

The repatriation of profit and dividend by foreign investors posted a healthy growth of 459 percent during the first two months of this fiscal year (FY25). According to State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) data, foreign companies repatriated \$ 274.7 million on account of profit and dividend during July-Aug of FY25 compared to \$49.2 million in the same period of last fiscal year (FY24), depicting an increase of \$225.5 million. Analysts said after the removal of restrictions on the outflow of the foreign exchange, a massive surge has been witnessed in the repatriation of profit and dividend for the past few months.

Previously, the federal government imposed some restrictions on outflow of foreign exchange to maintain the reserves at a reasonable level. Most of the amount was repatriated on account of return on FDI. With an increase of \$224 million or 509 percent, an amount of \$268 million was repatriated as return on FDI in the first two months of this fiscal year against \$44 million in the same month last year. In addition, repatriation of profit and dividend from portfolio investment rose by \$6.6 million in July-Aug of 2024 as compared to \$5.3 million in same period of last year 2023, showing an increase of \$1.3 million. Month-on-month basis, an amount of \$ 135.6 million was repatriated in August 2024, of which \$134.2 million was sent abroad on account of return on FDI, while \$1.4 million as return on FPI. (*Business Recorder, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

## **7.1 # Countries / Regions**

### ***4 countries 'commit' \$27bn investment in Pakistan, claims Ahsan***

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal says that four countries have allocated \$27 billion for investment through launching various mega projects in Pakistan under framework of the SIFC. “The SIFC is a very useful institution and framework under which our four brother countries have allocated \$27bn for investment. Saudi Arabia allocated \$5bn, UAE and Kuwait \$10bn each and Azerbaijan \$2bn,” he said while responding to various questions at a press conference in Lahore. The minister said the investment is expected to be made within the next two to four years, as, presently, the government is busy in preparing feasibilities for various

projects. According to him, Pakistan seeks trade, not loans, from China and Saudi Arabia. These two countries have consistently provided unconditional support in times of need since the existence of Pakistan. He said talks with the IMF were underway and soon an agreement would be finalised. (*Dawn, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***Denmark co keen to invest in mining sector***

Denmark has expressed its commitment to contribute to modernisation and investment in the country's mining industry. (*Business Recorder, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***EAD inks loan agreement with Exim Bank of South Korea***

Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan said that Pakistan would obtain \$20.635bn loan as per signed agreement between Economic Affairs Division and the Exim Bank of South Korea. He said the period for repayment of principal amount was 40 years. He said in addition, there was a grace period of 10 years. No amount had been repaid to lender so far. The minister said that no amount had yet been paid in the category of interest to date. He said that loan would be utilised to improve access to financial and public services by expanding the geographic reach of ICT infrastructure across nation including rural regions. (*Business Recorder, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 7*)

### ***Progress on MoUs signed with UAE reviewed***

Pakistan's ambassador to the UAE has said significant strides have been made in implementing seven MoU signed recently with Gulf country for cooperation in energy, agriculture, infrastructure, finance and technology sectors. MoUs, signed last year, relate to energy, port operations, wastewater treatment, food security, logistics, minerals, and banking and financial services sectors. (*Dawn, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***S Arabia offers 15pc investment in Reko Diq: report***

Saudi Arabia has offered 15 percent investment in the Reko Diq copper and gold mine project, according to Arab media, quoting Pakistani state-owned media. Reko Diq is considered one of the world's largest undeveloped copper and gold resources, primarily operated by Canada's Barrick Gold, which holds a 50 percent stake. The remaining stake is owned by three federal state-owned enterprises and Balochistan government, though Pakistan has invited Saudi Arabia to invest in the project. "Saudi Arabia has offered 15 percent investment in the Reko Diq mining project," Radio Pakistan reported. The report said, "The Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) has approved the structure of the offer, but the final decision has been left to the Cabinet Committee on Intergovernmental Transactions." Barrick Gold's top official, Mark Bristow, also acknowledged Saudi Arabia's interest in the project, saying his company would not dilute its equity. However, he said that Barrick Gold would not oppose any decision by the Pakistani government to sell part of its stake to Saudi Arabia. According to Radio Pakistan, the government expects up to \$5 billion in investment in the mining and agriculture sectors by June next year. (*The News, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Friendly nations to invest \$27bn: Ahsan***

Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal has said government is committed to bringing socio-economic and judicial reforms to put country on fast track economic development. Ahsan Iqbal said friendly countries have extended assurance of investing twenty seven billion dollars in Pakistan in the next five years. He said Saudi Arabia has announced to invest five billion dollars, while the UAE and Kuwait will each invest ten billion dollars and Azerbaijan will invest two billion dollars. He said these are the external opportunities that are knocking at our doors. He said China has also shown willingness for the second phase of CPEC. He said China has given assurance for establishment of five new corridors including that of growth, livelihood, innovation, green economy and open regional inclusive development. The Minister for Planning said that a Danish company has announced to invest two billion dollars in Pakistan's Port Infrastructure. (*Business Recorder, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***Belarussian businessmen urged to invest in country***

Pakistan extended an invitation to Belarusian investors to explore opportunities in the country through the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), assuring them of a secure investment environment. (*Business Recorder, September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***Minister calls for JVs in industrial, agri sectors with Belarus***

Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal has called for the establishment of joint ventures between Pakistan and Belarus in the industrial and agricultural sectors. Speaking at the Pakistan-Belarus Joint Ministerial Commission, he emphasised that these partnerships aim to strengthen the industrial base, generate new employment opportunities, and facilitate technology transfer. The Commerce minister invited Belarusian investors to explore the abundant investment opportunities in Pakistan, highlighting that SIFC has been established to streamline and promote foreign investment across key sectors, including agriculture, energy, technology, and infrastructure. During the last financial year (2023-24), the trade volume between Pakistan and Belarus was recorded at \$34.88 million, with Pakistan exporting goods valued at \$0.39 million to Belarus and importing goods worth \$34.49 million. (*Business Recorder, September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 7*)

### ***Pakistan, Belarus explore joint venture options for tractor plant***

Pakistan and Belarus discussed different options for a joint venture to establish a tractor plant in the country. Both sides agreed to collaborate on a foot-and-mouth disease vaccine to protect cattle, as well as on the capacity building of agricultural engineers in machinery design. The minister shared a detailed plan on cooperation in the livestock sector, the seed sector, the mechanisation of agriculture, and increasing market access for agricultural and livestock products. Pakistan greatly appreciates active engagement from the Belarusian side, aimed at fostering and enhancing bilateral cooperation and collaboration in agriculture and livestock. (*Dawn, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Diplomat hopeful more Italian firms will arrive in Pakistan***

Daniilo Giurdanella, the consul general of Italy in Karachi, has expressed hope that the presence of FPT, an Italian multinational designer and manufacturer of transmissions, axles, diesel and petrol engines in Pakistan, will inspire other Iveco group companies to enter the local market and capitalise its true potential. He said this at the launch of R24 FPT Engines in Karachi. (*Dawn, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 14*)

### ***EU says it is providing €700,000 aid to Pakistan***

The European Union announced it is providing €700,000 in humanitarian aid to Pakistan after widespread flooding and landslides caused loss of lives and significant damage to people's livelihood and key infrastructures in the country. In the meantime, King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre said that it has implemented 210 projects in Pakistan worth over \$184 million, improving the lives of vulnerable communities. (*Dawn, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***Italy firm acquires 50pc shareholding in Pakistani rice company***

A leading European agricultural production and food trading holding company of Italy has acquired 50 per cent shareholding in a Pakistani company engaged in paddy rice procurement and processing. The acquisition deal, approved by the Competition Commission of Pakistan, will boost the country's rice exports and foreign investment in Pakistan. This acquisition, under a share purchase agreement, represents a major advancement in attracting foreign direct investment to Pakistan, as global agribusiness leaders recognise the country's agricultural potential. Euricom SPA is renowned for its expertise in farming, processing, and trading of rice products. By acquiring a stake in Fatima Euricom Rice Mills, a Pakistan-based company engaged in paddy rice procurement and processing, the company aims to tap into Pakistan's rich agricultural potential. (*Dawn, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

## **7.2 # America**

### ***Talk with US-Pakistan Business Council delegation attracting US investment top priority: PM***

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has emphasized deepening Pakistan-US trade and investment ties. He said attracting the US foreign investments in all sectors of Pakistan's economy is government's priority. (*Business Recorder, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***PM invites American banks to invest in Pakistan***

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has invited American banks to invest in Pakistan in key sectors of infrastructure, energy, technology and agriculture. He was talking to a delegation of prominent Pakistani American bankers on the sidelines of the 79<sup>th</sup> session of UN General Assembly in New York. The delegation comprised high-ranking representatives from prestigious banks including JP Morgan, Natixis Corps & Investments, Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp, Goldman Sachs, Citizens Bank, Lazard, and Audax Group. (*Business Recorder, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### **7.3 # China**

#### ***Chinese firm to set up textile parks in Pakistan***

Chinese investment company RUYI will set up textile parks in Pakistan and will invite around 100 Chinese textile firms to invest in the facilities, a statement from the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's office said. The first park will be inaugurated later this year and will be completed in three years. These parks are expected to export products worth \$2 billion in the first phase and another \$5bn in second phase, which will create 300,000 to 500,000 local jobs. Park will run on zero-carbon automatic technology by using solar energy. RUYI already runs a coal power plant in the Sahiwal district of the eastern Pakistani province of Punjab. Beijing has been developing road, rail and port infrastructure in Pakistan as part of its \$65bn investment CPEC under President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). (*Dawn, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

#### ***China commits help for four mega road projects***

China has agreed to assist Pakistan in completing four major projects in transportation and communications sectors. Pakistan and China will work together for the completion of ML-1, M-6 and M-9 projects while the second phase of Karakoram Highway (KKH) and the construction of Kaghan-Naran, Jhal Khand, Babuser Top and Tunnel till KKH will be constructed. (*Dawn, September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 6*)

#### ***Chinese firms sign pacts for investment***

Chinese companies signed various MoUs with their Pakistani counterparts for investment in textile technology, agriculture and livestock sectors in Pakistan. The MoUs were signed at the 'Business Roundtable Conference' held at Pakistan Embassy in Beijing. At the conference, as many as 25 major Chinese companies expressed their deep interest in investing heavily in Pakistan. These investment companies specialise in agriculture, automobile, electrical alliances, pharmaceuticals, logistics, medical equipment and technology. Pakistan has second largest reserves of coal and the seventh largest reserves of copper, while we can become a centre of business activities in region by improving agriculture and livestock sectors. (*Dawn, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### **8 # INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (IFIs)**

#### ***IMF, ADB offer climate funding support: SBP governor***

Governor State Bank of Pakistan, Jameel Ahmad said developing countries like Pakistan face significant challenges in transitioning to green energy, including funding shortages and macroeconomic instability. To address this, IMF and Asian Development Bank (ADB) have expressed support for climate funding. He was speaking at the Asia Energy Summit organised by Lahore University of Management Sciences.

In response to the 2022 floods that exacerbated Pakistan's economic challenges, the State Bank and government have worked to stabilize the economy, with initiatives like revised financing schemes for renewable energy and environmental risk management manuals. Jameel Ahmad said for this purpose, SBP has taken number of initiative in

this regard, in 2016 we introduced a revised financing scheme for renewable energy with a total of 104 billion rupees and it also issued the environmental and social mismanagement manual in 2022 for the banking sector to facilitate the environmental risk, he said adding that SBP also introduced Green finance taxonomy in collaboration with the World Bank. (*Business Recorder, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

## **8.1 # ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (ADB)**

### ***ADB approves \$320m loan for KP development***

ADB approved a \$320 million loan to support the rehabilitation and improve climate-resilience, safety of roads in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that will help enhancing safe and all-weather connectivity in rural areas. (*Dawn, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***ADB sees 2.8pc growth amid political, funding risks***

Constrained by increased personal income tax rates and high energy costs and resultant low consumption, Pakistan's economic growth has been estimated to be struggling at 2.8 per cent in FY25, which remains subject to domestic and external risk, according to ADB. Therefore, average inflation is projected at 15pc in FY25. Fiscal consolidation targets tax measures equal to 3pc of GDP over the EFF period. With tax revenue measures equal to 1.5pc of GDP already implemented through the FY2025 budget, tax revenue is projected to rise to 11.2pc of GDP in FY2025. With non-tax revenue forecast at 3.1pc of GDP, total revenue is expected to increase to 14.3pc of GDP by the end of this fiscal year, it said. (*Dawn, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Pakistan to benefit from concessional education funding***

Pakistan will benefit from a financing partnership between ADB and a sovereign-backed Swiss Foundation, International Finance Facility for Education (IFFEd), to receive concessional education funding. ADB has signed an agreement with IFFEd that will enable at least \$500 million in new concessional education funding for lower middle-income countries in Asia and the Pacific. Pakistan is among the 10 countries of the region that are currently eligible for IFFEd funding. Besides Pakistan, the other nine countries are: Bangladesh, India, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam. (*Dawn, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

## **8.2 # International Monetary Fund (IMF)**

### ***Aurangzeb satisfied with IMF conditions for \$7bn bailout***

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb is sure to get approval from IMF's executive board for a new \$7 billion EFF this month and considers it the most significant achievement, said sources attending 21st Annual Excellence Awards hosted by CFA Society Pakistan. He said IMF loan is like a do-or-die for economy since debt servicing has exceeded \$26bn this year. SBP Governor Jameel Ahmed recently said that for FY25, Pakistan's external debt obligations amount to \$26.2bn, of which \$12.3bn will be rolled over. Around \$4bn in bilateral commercial loans will be repaid and refinanced, bringing total rollover or refinanced amount to \$16.3bn. (*Dawn, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Why IMF has intervened in the agri sector***

Just recently, under the \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) introduced a new condition that requires Pakistan's federal and provincial governments to phase out the crop minimum support price (MSP) system by June 2026. Currently, MSP is limited to just three crops — wheat, sugarcane, and cotton — unlike in India, where 23 crops benefit from it.

The MSP, widely used in many developing countries, serves two key purposes: it guarantees farmers a minimum return on their produce and stabilises the production and supply of essential crops. While the former aims to protect farmers from global price fluctuations and distress sales during periods of surplus, the latter safeguards consumers from supply-demand imbalances and market inefficiencies. These benefits, however, come at a cost; effective implementation requires robust institutional support, adequate crop storage infrastructure, and substantial financial resources.

Wheat — Pakistan's largest crop, cultivated on 9.6 million hectares — will be most affected by the IMF's condition. The MSP system for wheat is not inherently flawed, and it has largely provided stability to the wheat market in most years. However, the real issue lies in its implementation, which is plagued by massive inefficiencies, widespread corruption, and a heavy reliance on borrowing from commercial banks at high interest rates to finance wheat procurement and storage.

For instance, in previous years (except 2024), the Government of Punjab (Food Department) procured approximately 3.5-4.5m tonnes of wheat annually — about 16-20 per cent of Punjab's total production — to maintain strategic reserves and stabilise wheat flour prices. The government disposed of the procured wheat stocks through flour mills at a release price equal to or even above the MSP.

Over the years, government consistently borrowed substantial amounts every year but only managed to make partial repayments. As a result, the outstanding debt ballooned to Rs680bn in June 2023, with annual interest payments reaching Rs87bn in 2022-23 and Rs110bn in 2023-24. (*Dawn, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page Business & Finance 2*)

### ***PM brings good tidings of \$7bn IMF package***

The International Monetary Fund's board (IMF) approved a \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) for Pakistan, providing a critical boost to the country's struggling economy. "If the same hard work continues, God willing, this will be Pakistan's last IMF programme," PM Shehbaz said. (*Dawn, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Finally, \$7bn EFF approved by IMF board***

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) Executive Board approved Pakistan's 37-month Extended Fund Facility (EFF) arrangement of about \$7 billion aimed at supporting the authorities' efforts to cement macroeconomic stability and create conditions for a stronger, more inclusive, and resilient growth. The IMF Executive



Board considered Pakistan's request for an Extended Arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility. It also authorized to immediately release the first loan tranche of nearly \$1.1 billion, which is likely to be received by September 30. It is the 25th IMF programme that Pakistan has obtained. (*Business Recorder, September 26<sup>th</sup>, Page 1*)

### ***China, UAE, Saudi Arabia Pakistan wins additional financing assurances: IMF***

Pakistan has received "significant financing assurances" from China, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates linked to a new International Monetary Fund program that go beyond a deal to roll over \$12 billion in bilateral loans owed to them by Islamabad. IMF Pakistan Mission Chief Nathan Porter declined to provide details of additional financing amounts committed by China, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, but said these would come on top of the debt rollover. (*Business Recorder, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***State Bank reserves swell with \$1bn IMF tranche***

The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) announced that it has received the first tranche of \$1.03 billion from IMF, as part of the approved \$7 billion loan under the Extended Fund Facility. This inflow will boost the country's foreign exchange reserves, which stood at \$9.53bn as of Sept 20, surpassing \$10bn. The SBP said in a statement that it has received the first tranche of 760 million SDR, or special drawing rights, equivalent to \$1.027bn. The central bank noted that these funds will be reflected in its liquid reserves, with an official update expected on Thursday (Oct 3). (*Dawn, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***IMF projects 3.2pc growth***

The Fund has projected Pakistan's economic growth rate to rise to 3.2 per cent in the current fiscal year, compared to 2.4 per cent in the previous year. Further it forecasts a sharp decline in inflation, with the average rate projected to fall from 23.4 per cent to 9.5 per cent. Unemployment is expected to decrease from 8 per cent to 7.5 per cent. The IMF has projected an improvement in Pakistan's economic outlook following the approval of a \$7 billion loan package. In its latest data, the IMF predicted an acceleration in economic growth, a reduction in inflation, and a decrease in unemployment. The deficit could reduce to 6.1 per cent of GDP from last year's 6.8 per cent.

However, government debt, including loans from the IMF, is projected to rise, with debt-to-GDP increasing from 69.2 per cent to 71.4 per cent. Crude foreign exchange reserves are expected to improve, reaching \$12.75 billion by the end of the fiscal year, providing some relief to Pakistan's external sector. The IMF has projected an increase in expenditure from 19 per cent of GDP in 2024 to 21.4 per cent of GDP in 2025 and revenue and grant is projected to increase from 12.6 per cent of GDP in 2024 to 15.4 per cent in 2025. (*Business Recorder, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***IMF sets key targets under \$7bn bailout for Pakistan***

IMF has set key economic targets for Pakistan under its \$7 billion, 37-month Extended Fund Facility (EFF) aimed at stabilizing the economy through fiscal reforms and promoting sustainable growth. The IMF's projections for fiscal year 2025 show GDP

growth at 3.2 percent and inflation moderating to 9.2 percent, marking a significant recovery for the country. The IMF has emphasized the need for strong fiscal reforms to ensure long-term sustainability. Pakistan's government revenue, including grants, is projected to rise from 12.6 percent of GDP in FY2024 to 15.4 percent in FY2025.

The fiscal deficit (income-expenditure gap), including grants, is expected to narrow from 6.7 percent to 6.0 percent of GDP during the same period, while excluding grants, the deficit is projected at 6.1 percent of GDP for FY2025. In a notable improvement, Pakistan's primary balance (excluding grants) is expected to shift from a surplus of 0.9 percent of GDP in FY2024 to 2 percent of GDP in FY2025, a substantial turnaround from the 0.9 percent deficit seen in FY2023.

Public debt, which was 74.9 percent of GDP (excluding IMF obligations) in FY2023, declined to 67 percent in FY2024, is now projected to rise slightly to 69 percent in FY2025. External debt, which stood at 28.6 percent of GDP in FY2023, dropped to 22.6 percent in FY2024 and is projected to rise again to 24 percent in FY2025. Pakistan's current account deficit, which had shrunk from 1.0 percent of GDP in FY2023 to 0.2 percent in FY2024, is expected to widen again to 0.9 percent by FY2025. Foreign direct investment (FDI), which held steady at 0.5pc of GDP in FY2024, is forecast to decline slightly to 0.4pc of GDP in FY2025. (*The News, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

## **9 # POLICY**

### **9.1 # Developmental Policy**

#### ***CDWP clears eight projects worth Rs144bn***

The Central Development Working Party (CDWP) cleared a total of eight development projects worth Rs144.3 billion. A meeting of the CDWP approved five development projects with an estimated cost of Rs15.35bn and recommended three others worth Rs129bn to the Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecneec) for formal approval. The CDWP referred to Ecneec for approval a Rs52.772bn health sector project called "Establishment of Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cancer Treatment & Research, Lahore". The CDWP approved an education sector project, "Reaching Out of School Children (OOSC) in AJK", worth Rs7.183bn. Islamic Development Bank is providing financing to the project. (*Dawn, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

#### ***Ecneec clears 6 mega projects worth Rs178.1bn***

Ecneec approved six mega development projects with Rs 178.1bn in the areas of health, agriculture, energy and transport. These projects include: Establishment of Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cancer Treatment & Research, Lahore (worth Rs. 52,772.520mn), (Source of financing: ADP, Govt of Punjab). Sindh Livestock and Aquaculture Development Project (worth Rs. 38,360mn), (Source of Financing: World Bank Assistance). Construction of 84 MW Gorkin Matiltan HPP (Revised) (worth Rs. 35758mn) Source of financing: 20% through provincial ADP; and 80% through KP Hydel Development Fund) (*Business Recorder, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***Six schemes worth Rs14bn approved***

The Provincial Development Working Party approved six schemes with an estimated cost of Rs14 billion. The CM Population Management and Family Planning Programme will get Rs1bn. Board approved Rs999.726m for improvement of Jhang-Toba Tek Singh road from Shakarganj Sugar Mill to Toba Tek Singh Motorway Interchange; Rs2.79bn for rehabilitation of Jhang-Bhakkar Road from Mallu Mor to Bharairhi, Rs6.284bn for design and construction of a Net Zero Energy Building and Rs2.31bn for construction of Rohtas Fort By-Pass Road. (*Dawn, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***Afghanistan to begin work on TAPI gas pipeline***

Afghanistan said work would begin on a \$10bn gas pipeline traversing South Asia as officials joined dignitaries in neighbouring Turkmenistan to celebrate its completion on that side of border. Progress on TAPI pipeline — running through Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India — has been repeatedly delayed because of security issues in conflict-ravaged Afghanistan. Pakistan and India will each purchase 42% of gas deliveries, and Afghanistan 16%, while Kabul will also benefit from lucrative transit fees of around \$500m per year. Work on Turkmen side began in 2015 and was initially scheduled to start in Afghanistan in 2018, but has been repeatedly delayed. India’s commitment to pipeline has also previously been questioned over its relationship with Pakistan and its already easy access to liquefied natural gas markets. (*Dawn, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Karachi: Sindh CM announces Rs200bn development plan***

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah announced an extensive development plan of Rs200bn for Karachi. (*Business Recorder, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

## **10 # SOCIO – ECONOMICAL CONDITION**

### ***Govt caught in a ‘double debt’ trap***

The domestic debt of central government increased by Rs537 billion in July, reflecting the surging expenditure of the state machinery. Experts in the media have been stating that heavy borrowing will be necessary due to a revenue shortfall that started from the first day of 2024-25. The country is caught in a double debt trap, with domestic and foreign debt servicing consuming almost all tax revenue, forcing the government to rely solely on borrowing to survive. Further details show that the country’s total debt rose to Rs69.604tr at the end of July from Rs68.914tr in June, a rise of Rs690bn in a month. The total debt surged by Rs7.827tr to Rs69.604tr from Rs61.777tr in July 2023. The government has projected a borrowing estimate of Rs9.3 trillion for FY25 to bridge the revenue gaps to meet its current expenditure.

The federal government borrowed a record Rs8.4tr from the domestic banking system in FY24 for budgetary support to finance the fiscal deficit at an unprecedented interest rate of 22pc, which overburdened the economy. The debt servicing in FY24 reached Rs8.3tr, indicating a deteriorating economic situation. The latest data from the State Bank issued showed that the government’s domestic borrowing rose to Rs47.697tr at the end of July compared to Rs47.160tr in June, an increase of Rs537bn. However,

domestic borrowing jumped from Rs39.016tr in July 2023 to Rs47.697tr, an increase of Rs8.681tr. This heavy borrowing in the last 12 months will force the government to borrow more for debt servicing in FY25. (*Dawn, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Govt debt stocks rise to Rs69.9trn***

The federal government's total debt stocks rose to Rs 69.6 trillion mark at the end of July 2024 primarily due to borrowing from domestic and foreign sources to finance the fiscal deficit. SBP reported that central government's total debt (domestic and external) increased by 1 percent during first month of this fiscal year (FY25). Overall, the federal government's total debt stock crossed the Rs 69 trillion mark and surged to an all-time high level of Rs 69.604 trillion by the end of July 2024 compared to Rs 68.914 trillion as of June 2024, depicting an increase of Rs 690 billion just in a month.

During period under review, a major surge was witnessed in domestic debt stocks. The central government's borrowings from domestic resources mounted up by 1.1 percent or Rs 537 billion to Rs 47.697 trillion in July 2024 up from Rs 47.160 trillion in June 2024. The government's domestic borrowings were dominated by long-term loans worth Rs 36.941 trillion and Rs 10.638 trillion short term borrowing.

The external debt in rupee terms rose by 0.7 percent or Rs 153 billion during the first month of this fiscal year. The total stocks of external debt rose to Rs 21.907 trillion at the end of July 2024 as against Rs 21.754 trillion in June 2024. According to the SBP, US dollar, last day Weighted Average Customer Exchange Rates was Rs 278.3668 in June 2024, while it Rs 278.7742 in July 2024.

On Year on Year basis, the central government's total borrowing from domestic and external resources rose by 12.66pc or Rs 7.827 trillion, as federal government's total debt stock stood at Rs 61.777 trillion in July 2023. It may be mentioned here that currently, the country's total foreign exchange reserves stood at \$ 14.74 billion including \$9.437 billion of the SBP and \$5.3 billion of commercial banks. During the week ended on 30-Aug-2024, SBP reserves increased by \$ 33 million to US\$ 9.437 billion. (*Business Recorder, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 16*)

### ***Govt to borrow Rs3.5tr in three months***

The government will borrow Rs3.5 trillion during next three months to meet increasing liquidity requirement. State Bank's calendar shows that government will raise Rs3.475tr from Sept 4 to Nov 27 through treasury bills. However, this amount is less than the maturing amount of Rs4.594tr during the same period. Over the past several years, the government's substantial borrowing from the banking sector has significantly strained the economy to the extent that the entire tax revenue is now being utilised for debt servicing. The interest rate was at an unprecedented 22pc in FY24, and the government borrowed a record around Rs8.4tr same year. (*Dawn, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

***FY2025 to FY29: External debt maturity estimated to be over \$100bn***

Pakistan's external debt maturity is estimated to be over \$100 billion during fiscal year 2025 to fiscal year 2029 (five years), revealed Finance Division. Mohsin Mushtaq, Director General (Debt), informed National Assembly Standing Committee on Finance that friendly countries would rollover \$12.7 billion in the current fiscal year for Pakistan which includes; \$5 billion from Saudi Arabia, \$4 billion from China, \$3 billion from UAE and \$0.7 billion from Kuwait. Sources, while quoting Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, revealed that \$7 billion would come from the IMF, while an additional \$5 billion will need to be secured from commercial banks and other lenders.

The committee which met with Syed Naveed Qamar was informed that as of end June 2024, total public debt was recorded as Rs71.2 trillion, of which, Rs47.2 trillion was domestic debt and Rs24.1 trillion was external debt. The committee was also informed that the country would be required to arrange more than \$100 billion in external financing over the five years to meet its debt obligations. This includes rolling over \$12.7 billion in deposits from countries like China, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

The meeting was briefed that despite a recent increase in foreign exchange reserves to \$9.5 billion, the external account remains fragile. Pakistan's debt-to-GDP ratio has decreased from 75 percent to 67.2 percent, but total loans have surged to Rs71.24 trillion from Rs62.88 trillion in fiscal year 2023. The committee was informed that Pakistan faces external payments of \$18.83 billion this year, \$9.23 billion in 2026, \$8.71 billion in 2027, \$7.68 billion in 2028, and \$6.88bn in 2029. This does not include the repayment of deposits from friendly countries. (*Business Recorder, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

***81 industries shut down in five years due to power crisis, Sindh Assembly told***

The Sindh Assembly was informed that around 81 industrial units, including 10 textile mills and five sugar mills, had been closed during the past five years due to the electricity crisis in the province. (*Dawn, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

***July-August: \$714.74m borrowed from multiple sources***

The country borrowed \$714.74 million from multiple financing sources during the first two months (July-August) of the current fiscal year 2024-25 compared to \$3.206 billion borrowed during the same period of 2023-24, revealed the Economic Affairs Division (EAD) data. The data revealed that government has budgeted estimates of time deposits of \$9 billion including \$5 billion KSA time deposit and \$4 billion SAFE China deposit for the current fiscal year, however, no money was received in July-August under this head. There is also no mention of assistance from the UAE.

The government had budgeted \$19.393 billion from multiple financing sources for fiscal year 2024-25 including \$19.216 billion loans and \$176.29 million grants. However, this does not include any amount from IMF. The data further showed that the government

had budgeted estimates of \$3.779 billion from the foreign commercial banks for the fiscal year 2024-25; however, no money was received under this head during the first two months. The government has also budgeted estimates of \$1 billion from the issuance of bonds; however, as the country did not issue the bonds, hence no amount was received during the first two months of 2024-25. The country received \$270.53 million in August 2024 from different sources. The country received \$259.04 million under the head of the “Naya Pakistan Certificate” during the first two months of current fiscal year 2024-25 including \$131.35 million in August.

The country received \$292.99 million from multilaterals and \$162.70 million from bilateral during July-August 2024. The non-project aid was \$273.12 million including \$14.07 million for budgetary support and project aid was \$441.62 million during the first two months of current fiscal year. ADB disbursed \$96.20 million during the period under review compared to the budgeted \$1.651 billion for the fiscal year 2024-25. The IDA disbursed \$147.86 million in July-August against the budgeted \$1.525 billion for FY 2024-25 and IBRD \$28.88 million against budgeted \$550.22 million.

The IsDB (Short-term) did not disburse any amount in July-August, however, the government has budgeted estimates of \$500 million for the fiscal year 2024-25 and AIIB disbursed \$8.73 million, while IFAD disbursed \$9.59 million against the budgeted \$40.45 million for the fiscal year 2024-25. China disbursed \$96.76m in July; however, no money was received in August from China. The government has budgeted \$134.18m from China for fiscal year 2024-25. Saudi Arabia disbursed \$2.69m in first month of FY 2024-25 against budgeted estimates of \$146.54m for the entire fiscal year; however, no amount was received in August. USA disbursed \$30.94m in first two months against budgeted \$20.87m for FY 2024-25. (*Business Recorder, September 26<sup>th</sup>, Page 1*)

### **10.1 # Discovery**

#### ***Massive oil, gas reserves found in Pakistani waters: senior security official***

A substantial deposit of petroleum and natural gas has been discovered in Pakistan’s territorial waters, a cache so large its exploitation could change the country’s destiny. According to the official, who is understood to be privy to the development, a three-year survey was undertaken in collaboration with a friendly country to verify the presence of the oil and gas reserves. Terming it an effort to benefit from what he called ‘blue water economy’, that proposals for bidding and exploration were being studied, meaning that the exploration work can be started in the near future. (*Dawn, September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### **10.2 # Food Scarcity**

#### ***Malnutrition epidemic***

Malnutrition has been a primary factor in Pakistan’s disease burden for many years. Recently, the Women’s Parliamentary Caucus, along with representatives from Unicef and Fafen, observed that malnutrition costs Pakistan approximately 3pc of its GDP and highlighted the country’s status as the second highest in diabetic patients, laying

significant emphasis on the need for “targeted intervention” with child- and family-related laws and gender-specific social issues to propel impactful policy amendments. At present, four out of 10 children under five years of age are stunted, 17.7pc suffer from wasting, 28.9pc are underweight and 9.5pc in the same age bracket are overweight. Last year, an IPC analysis showed that a shocking 2.14m children are acutely malnourished across the country. This is the disgraceful result of government apathy and demonstrates reluctance to take up nutrition as a political programme.

Our lawmakers cannot escape the fact that malnutrition is a major socioeconomic determinant of maternal health, gender empowerment, child marriage and education, and that it poses a grave threat to entire communities, the economy and above all, our children. Modern, multipronged and urgently enforced strategies are required to alleviate the detrimental effects of poverty and disparity. An overhaul of health units, a focus on guided hygiene practices, healthcare, food security and knowledge regarding sanitation, nutrition and feeding habits among women and children should form the core focus of government-driven campaigns and policies. Even a semblance of reduced undernutrition, malnutrition indicators cannot be achieved without sustained financing and reforms in healthcare division to narrow gap between posh and low-income localities as well as rural and urban areas. In a moribund economy, none of this can begin without international aid and collaboration. (*Dawn, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 6*)

#### ***41pc Pakistani women anaemic: survey***

The National Nutrition Survey report ‘Cost of In Action Tool’ revealed that more than 41 percent of Pakistani women are anaemic, while 22.4 percent are vitamin A deficient. The survey report was presented at the National Policy Dialogue on the Economic Case for Maternal Nutrition, organised by the Ministry of National Health Services, in collaboration with Nutrition International (NI). A recent survey report highlights the malnutrition crisis among Pakistani women, ranking Pakistan 4th out of 8 South Asian countries and 35th out of 201 countries worldwide in terms of anaemia among women.

The report states that out of more than 41 percent of Pakistani women suffering from anaemia, 14.4 percent are underweight while 24 percent are overweight while 13.8 percent are obese. According to the report, 9 lakh 18 thousand 154 new cases of anaemia occur every year among pregnant women and women aged 15 to 49 years. According to the survey report, the condition of maternal nutrition is bad, 186 women die after giving birth to 1 lakh children. Similarly, non-adherence to recommended standards in breastfeeding causes 2,000 maternal deaths from breast and ovarian cancer, 1,000 from ovarian cancer and about 100 deaths from diabetes each year. In addition, 1.4 lakh cases of low birth weight are reported in Pakistani women every year.

Nutrition International said that Pakistan loses at least 17 billion dollars every year due to malnutrition. During the event, the federal government also signed a declaration with stakeholders, in which they pledged to accelerate the implementation of the ‘Pakistan

Maternal Nutrition Strategy 2022-27'. This declaration has been endorsed by the Federal Ministry of Health, the Health Departments of the four provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir and other stakeholders including WHO, UNICEF, WFP and others. (*Business Recorder, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### **10.3 # Inflation**

#### ***Consumers paying higher prices as food exports surge***

Exports of raw food items continued to increase in the current fiscal year, with a 42.39 per cent gain in the first two months compared to the same period of the previous year. The value of raw food exports reached \$1.01 billion in July-August from \$710.65 million over the corresponding months of last year, according to data compiled by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. In FY24, the raw food exports touched \$8bn, up from \$5.8bn over the preceding year.

As a result, consumers nationwide are paying higher prices for food items because of supply and demand gaps. Raw food exports have climbed for the past 13 consecutive months despite the highest food inflation in history. The government has allowed sugar export despite an average retail price of Rs160 per kg. In the first two months, sugar exports reached 86,148 tonnes, compared to 6,146 tonnes in the same months last year, showing an increase of 160.26pc. Millers have mainly exported sugar to Afghanistan.

Rice is a major contributor to the rise in food exports. Rice exports increased by 98.58pc in the first two months of FY25 compared to the previous year. The quantity and value of basmati rice increased by 136.19pc and 103.63pc, respectively. Exports of rice, other than basmati, increased 95.16pc in value and 64.44pc in quantity in 2MFY25 over the last year. Due to a sustained surge in export figures over the past two years, the average price of basmati rice has surged to Rs400 per kg from Rs150, restricting buying from domestic consumers. (*Dawn, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

#### ***Inflation likely to drop to 7.3pc in September amid high base effect: report***

Pakistan's annual consumer price inflation is expected to decline further in September, mainly due to a high base effect. "After falling into the single-digit territory, headline inflation is expected to continue its downward trend, projected to reach 7.3 per cent, compared to 9.6 per cent in the preceding month and 31.4 per cent in the same period last year, said Insight Securities. (*The News, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 17*)

### **11 # ENVIRONMENT**

#### ***Smog claims 250,000 lives annually: Marriyum Aurangzeb***

Senior Punjab Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb has disclosed that smog is responsible for 250,000 deaths annually. She made this revelation while addressing the media about the smog crisis. The minister said that in cities such as Lahore, Sheikhupura and Kasur, the Air Quality Index (AQI) typically reaches 250 and surges to 450 during the smog season. (*The News, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)



### ***Sindh, Balochistan govts urged to step up efforts to conserve marine ecosystems***

Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam urged Sindh and Balochistan governments to boost efforts to conserve marine ecosystems. The PM coordinator appreciated the Balochistan government's move for protection of Churna Island declaring it as a marine protected area. She called for additional marine protected areas to be established to achieve the global target of protecting 30 per cent of the ocean area by 2030. The island is home to over 50 species of corals, 250 species of fish, and numerous invertebrates and vertebrates. (*Dawn, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)=

### ***PM reaffirms country's commitment to ozone layer protection***

PM Shehbaz Sharif has reiterated Pakistan's strong commitment to the preservation of ozone layer, marking World Ozone Day. He highlighted that Pakistan successfully phased out the first generation of ODS by 2009 and achieved a 50% reduction in HCFCs by 2020. The country is on track to meet its target of a 67.5% reduction by 2025, with many industries having already transitioned to ozone-friendly technologies. (*Business Recorder, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

## **11.1 # Health**

### ***Spike in dengue virus cases in ICT***

Following end of monsoon season, the federal capital Islamabad has witnessed a spike in dengue virus cases as the district health authorities detected seven fresh dengue cases taking the seasonal tally to 111 cases. (*Business Recorder, September 10<sup>th</sup>, Page 2*)

### ***Experts warn of Pakistan's rising suicide rates on World Prevention Day***

At an event marking World Suicide Prevention Day, speakers highlighted the alarming rise in suicide rates in Pakistan and called for a national strategy to address this urgent issue. They noted that the suicide mortality rate was on the rise. Citing the World Health Organisation (WHO), a speaker said there were 7.3 suicides per 100,000 in 2019, which rose to 8.9 in 2020, and 9.8 in 2022. (*Dawn, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***Downplayed by Punjab health dept, dengue may turn into full-blown epidemic***

Apparently, Punjab health authorities have been misleading chief minister by generating 'fake reports' to show low prevalence of the dengue virus in the province, which may sock the provincial government later as the mosquito-borne disease is fast becoming an epidemic. The reports, contrary to the officially reported cases, suggest that the number of patients with dengue fever has increased manifold and the province was on the verge of an outbreak of the disease. (*Dawn, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***Rotting bodies in Khairpur Civil Hospital's morgue infect several employees***

Acting upon media reports, which claimed that several employees posted in the morgue of the Khairpur Civil Hospital got infected while handling three rotting bodies, the district administration has constituted an inquiry committee to ascertain facts leading to the situation. (*Dawn, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Three more polio cases take year's tally to 21***

The country reported three more polio cases, raising the total to 21 for the year, with affected children belonging to Qila Abdullah in Balochistan, Karachi's Keamari in Sindh, and Mohmand in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. (*Dawn, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Another polio case in Sindh takes year's tally to 24***

A second case of poliovirus in as many days took this year's tally to 24, four times more as compared to 2023. The latest child to be affected by the paralytic disease is a 29-month-old boy in Hyderabad district of Sindh. (*Dawn, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Over 70 new dengue cases reported in KP***

372 active dengue cases have been reported in the province, with only 21 patients hospitalised. A total of 760 dengue cases have so far been reported, with 388 patients recovering from the disease. (*Dawn, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

## **12 # CLIMATE CHANGE**

### ***\$77.8m 'Recharge Pakistan' project being launched on 10th***

The \$77.8 million "Recharge Pakistan" project that aims to improve the resilience of some of the country's most vulnerable communities affected by the impacts of climate change will formally be launched on 10 September 2024 in Islamabad. Championed by Government of Pakistan's Ministry of Climate Change and the Federal Flood Commission, under the Ministry of Water Resources, this project has been made possible with the support of Green Climate Fund, USAID, The Coca-Cola Foundation (TCCF) and WWF. (*Business Recorder, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***US to help Pakistan protect people from impact of climate change, says Blome***

United States Ambassador Donald Blome launched "Recharge Pakistan" — an ambitious climate initiative aimed at strengthening flood resilience and improving water security in some of the country's most vulnerable regions. Addressing the inaugural ceremony at the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services in Islamabad, Ambassador Blome said US would continue to broaden and deepen its partnership with Pakistan to protect climate-vulnerable communities, and build a greener, more prosperous and climate-resilient future. Building a coalition of common action is critical to meeting the climate crisis head on, and US is proud to join forces with Coca-Cola, Green Climate Fund, the World Wide Fund, and the Pakistan government on this landmark initiative.

Recharge Pakistan's network of green infrastructure projects will work to rehabilitate floodwater channels and reroute excess water away from where people live. It will try to reforest and restore wetlands to prevent dangerous runoff. The USAID has contributed \$5 million to a partnership with WWF and Coca-Cola Foundation. This partnership will leverage a \$66m grant from Green Climate Fund (GCF) to complement natural systems (watershed, wetlands, drainage system, forestation) to enhance Pakistan's climate resilience with the goal of reducing flood and drought risk across the

Indus Basin. The project will introduce an ecosystem-based approach and a network of green infrastructure to increase groundwater recharge, reduce flood hazard, promote climate-smart agriculture, support private sector engagement and strengthen policy environment in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and Balochistan.

In recent years, through the US-Pakistan “Green Alliance” framework, we have partnered with both industry and the Pakistan government on renewable energy, smart agriculture and water management. The United States has provided \$5 billion to the Green Climate Fund. And together, we are bringing new investment in renewable energy to help Pakistan achieve its ambitious goal of reaching 60 per cent renewable energy by 2030.” As the fifth most vulnerable country to climate change, according to the Global Climate Risk Index, Pakistan is already feeling effects of the climate crisis every day. (*Dawn, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***Glacial melt in Indus River basin rising at dangerous rate: NDMA head***

NDMA Chairman Lt Gen Inam Haider Malik said glacial melt in the Indus River basin was accelerating at a dangerous rate, pointing out the alarming impact of warming on the cryosphere. (*Dawn, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

## **13 # CLIMATE DISASTERS**

### ***\$19bn shortfall halts flood reconstruction***

Pakistan has received \$10.9 billion from international development partners out of the \$30 billion total estimated loss for post-flood reconstruction work, leaving a \$19.1 billion shortfall that has halted the rehabilitation of flood-affected communities in three provinces. The estimated loss of 2022 floods was \$30bn. The estimated financial need for recovery was projected at \$16.2bn against the received pledges of \$10.9bn. Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) estimated that the total damages exceeded \$14.9bn, with economic losses reaching \$15.2bn. The assessment also projected a significant increase in food insecurity, with the number of affected people expected to rise from 7 million to 14.6m. Additionally, over 2m housing units were damaged, including 780,000 completely destroyed and more than 1.2 million partially damaged. (*Dawn, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***‘Anticipatory Action’ to prevent disaster impacts being tested***

The ‘Anticipatory Action’ (AA) approach that prevents or reduces acute humanitarian impacts of national disasters before they fully unfold, are being tested in provinces of Pakistan where farmers and agricultural livelihoods are particularly vulnerable to extreme floods, droughts and cyclones, says FAO. The current anticipatory action interventions in the country have largely been donor-funded, but there are opportunities to mainstream AA into government systems at national and provincial levels, especially through reforms in the national Disaster Risk Financing (DRF) strategy and existing disaster management funds, such as the National Disaster Management Fund (NDMF), says Pakistan Disaster Risk Financing report. (*Dawn, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### **13.1 # Rainfall / Flood**

#### ***Heavy rain, flood wreak havoc across Balochistan***

Heavy monsoon rains with flash flood destroyed road infrastructure, rendering hundreds of families homeless after large numbers of mud houses collapsed in different areas of the province. Also, Afghan transit trade was suspended as the Quetta-Chaman highway was damaged at various places. Officials said the mountainous area of Khojak Pass linking Quetta with Chaman and Kandahar received heavy rain that damaged the historical Shella Bagh tunnel, which was filled up with mud, suspending rail-link with the border town of Chaman. (*The News, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

#### ***Five dead as flash floods devastate northern Balochistan***

At least five people lost their lives in different parts of Balochistan as heavy monsoon rains continued to batter the province, with the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) warning of more rain and landslides in several parts of the country. Meanwhile, the cyclonic storm Asna has moved further south-westwards over the past 12 hours, weakening into a deep depression. (*Dawn, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

#### ***Recent rains, flooding caused over Rs86bn losses to farmers: minister***

Recent heavy rain and subsequent flooding have caused widespread damage to various crops across the province, resulting in an estimated loss of Rs86.86 billion to farmers, according to a preliminary report on the rain-induced losses released by Sindh Minister for Agriculture Sardar Mohammad Bux Mehar. The minister provided a breakdown of the damage, stating that 541,351 acres of crops had been completely destroyed, specifically 293,580 acres of cotton crop had been seriously affected by the downpour. Rice crop had been completely destroyed on 35,271 acres and partially damaged on 269,016 acres, similarly, date palm had suffered massive losses on 53,195 acres and partial loss on 32,849 acres. The minister noted that sugar cane crop had been completely destroyed on 26,382 acres and partially damaged on 69,689 acres. Additionally, tomato nurseries had experienced 3.4 pc loss, sesame 22 pc, onion 58 pc, chili 12 pc and vegetables suffered 18 pc loss. (*Dawn, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

#### ***Deadly hill torrents claim four lives***

Four people, including two children, lost their lives due to hill torrents which affected Wadoor, Sanghar and Mithawan areas. (*Dawn, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

#### ***Naukot flooded as swollen Dhoro Puran develops breach***

Dhoro Puran developed about 200-foot wide breach near Naukot town, inundating several localities of the town with little efforts on ground by the department concerned to plug the breach. Floodwaters entered Harejan Colony, Mallah Colony, Darzi Paro while Hakro Dhoro on the other side of the town had already overtopped, flooding crops of cotton, chili, vegetables etc in Jhuddo taluka, and several villages. The villages' residents had to escape to safer places along with their cattle and valuable belongings. (*Dawn, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Flash floods kill 341: NDMA***

This year flash floods triggered by monsoon rains have killed 341 people, injured 613 and destroyed 26,732 houses across the country, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) said. The latest situation report issued by NDMA said the flooding triggered by monsoon rains is still playing havoc across the country as at least four persons were killed, nine injured, 419 houses were destroyed and one livestock was killed in past 24 hours nationwide. (*Business Recorder, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 16*)

### ***Heavy rain lashes parts of twin cities***

Heavy rain lashed most parts of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, inundating streets and roads in the garrison city and lowering temperature. (*Dawn, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

## **13.2 # Lightning**

### ***Five of family among eleven killed in KP lightning, roof collapse incidents***

Eleven people, including five members of a family, were killed in roof collapse and lightning incidents amid rainfall and windstorms in Charsadda, Mardan and Upper Dir districts. (*Dawn, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***Lightning kills two in Sialkot***

Two persons were killed in Sialkot and one was seriously injured in Narowal due to lightning strikes. The region experienced light and heavy rains accompanied by thunderstorms, breaking the intense heat wave. The strong winds and rain damaged the rice crop. (*Dawn, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

## **13.3 # Heatwave**

### ***One third of children exposed to heatwaves***

One-third of the total global child population, 766 million, were exposed to extreme heatwaves between July 2023 and June 2024 as temperatures hit new record highs, said a report released by 'Save the Children'. The body working for children's rights said during the same period, 344m children experienced the highest temperature recorded in their location since at least 1980. In April and May 2024, more than 210m children missed out on their school days due to extreme heat. In Punjab, at least 26m children or 52pc of all country's pupils in education missed classes due to extreme heat in May. The data showed that the number of children affected by extreme heatwaves almost doubled from 2022-23 to 2023-24. (*Dawn, September 2nd, 2024, Page 5*)

## **14 # NATURAL DISASTERS**

### **14.1 # Earthquake**

#### ***Quake jolts KP parts***

An Earthquake jolted Chitral District and surrounding areas of KP. Earthquake measured as a magnitude of 3.7 and a depth of 22 kilometers. No loss of life or property was reported as a result of the earthquake. (*The News, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***Punjab jolted by earthquake***

The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) reported no loss of life or property across Punjab following an earthquake. The earthquake's magnitude was recorded at 5.7 in Lahore and other districts of Punjab. Its epicentre was Shadiwala in Dera Ghazi Khan, with a depth of 10km. (*Dawn, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### **14.2 # Landslide**

#### ***Landslide kills three people in Upper Kohistan***

Three people, including two army soldiers, were killed and another sustained injuries when a massive boulder detached from a nearby mountain along Karakoram Highway and rolled down over a passenger coach in Loter area of Upper Kohistan. (*Dawn, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### **15 # RESISTANCE**

#### ***Closure of Torkham road causes whopping monetary loss to national kitty***

The ongoing blockade of the main Torkham highway by Kukikhel protesters has largely 'spoiled' the peak import season from Afghanistan and so far has caused a whopping monetary loss of approximately Rs540 million to national exchequer on a daily basis since August 21. (*Dawn, September 2nd, 2024, Page 9*)

#### ***LG Chairmen stage protest to demand uplift funds***

Chairmen of tehsil, village and neighbourhood councils took out a rally demanding the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to release development funds and facilitate them to serve the people as enshrined in the Local Government Act 2013. The rally, taken out from outside the Press Club, turned into a protest gathering after marching through different roads. (*Dawn, September 2nd, 2024, Page 9*)

#### ***Kohistan residents block Karakoram Highway***

Residents of Dubair and Ranowalia areas in Lower Kohistan district blocked the Karakoram Highway to protest Wapda's failure to honour a 2022 agreement for road reconstruction and water supply. The highway's closure inconvenienced people traveling between KP and Gilgit-Baltistan. (*Dawn, September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

#### ***Lawyers protest proposed amendments to Constitution***

The Karachi Bar Association (KBA) has expressed concern over the proposed 26th amendment to Constitution, stating that its introduction in a 'secretive and mysterious' manner violates parliamentary procedure. In its resolution passed, KBA stated that the unprecedented proposed amendments, including the reported extension of the age limit for justices and judges, not only violate the basic structure of the Constitution but also constitute an assault on it and superior courts. (*Dawn, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

#### ***Public prosecutors go on indefinite strike***

Public prosecutors started a province-wide strike for acceptance of their demands including setting up of an independent prosecution department and office of prosecutor

general on pattern of other provinces. The indefinite strike call was given by Prosecution Officers Welfare Association, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in a provincial convention of prosecutors a day earlier. Prosecutors mostly stayed away from official work and didn't appear in cases on behalf of the government before courts. Association has put forward a nine-point charter of demands to government stating that early this year government had made commitment that their demands would be fulfilled but so far the matter was being delayed. (*Dawn, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***Mansehra lawyers boycott courts***

The lawyers' community boycotted court proceedings to protest killing of a senior colleague. On call of district bar association, lawyers' fraternity observed complete boycott of courts to protest against killing of Iftikhar Khan, former vice-president and a member of district bar association. (*Dawn, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***Pilgrims stranded by transporters' protest in Gwadar***

A sit-in by local transporters in the port city of Gwadar for the second-consecutive day has left hundreds of pilgrims returning from Iran stranded. The pick-up owners' alliance is holding a protest against the alleged atrocities of the Coast Guards at the Surbandan Cross. Hundreds of protesters have placed barricades and boulders on the Coastal Highway and stopped traffic. The pilgrims, including women and children, are stranded at the Pak-Iran border and waiting for the opening of the coastal highway. (*Dawn, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 14*)

### ***Makran coastal highway sit-in ends after govt accepts demands***

The protesting owners and drivers of pick-up and other vehicles called off their sit-in at Surbandan Cross and Zero Point areas of Makran Coastal Highway and other linking roads after the local administration accepted their demands. Traffic on coastal highway and other roads linking Makran was reopened after the agreement as protesters ended their sit-in after four days. (*Dawn, September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

## **15.1 # Agricultural Sector**

### ***JSM-R plans Sindh-wide protests against corporate farming***

Jeay Sindh Mahaz-Riaz (JSM-R) Chairman Riaz Ali Chandio has strongly opposed any amendment to the Irsa Act. He also announced a Sindh-wide protest on Sept 22 and a shutdown strike on October 20 against government's corporate farming plan in Sindh. He said that the lands being acquired for corporate farming should be distributed among poor landless farmers. He deplored that Punjab had violated the 1945 water agreement with Sindh and executed controversial canal projects with the results that Kotri Barrage downstream flows were not being released. He said that these projects had destroyed world's 7th largest delta in Sindh. Mangroves forests have been done away with and sea intrusion's pace has increased which posed an existential threat to local communities. (*Dawn, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***AT holds protest rally in Larkana***

Awami Tahreek (AT) organised a rally against proposed amendments to the Indus River System Authority (Irsa) Act, describing it as an ‘anti-Sindh’ move. It urged the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leadership to “stop befooling people with their speeches in parliament”. The participants carrying party flags and placards and chanting slogans marched through various roads and assembled outside the local press club, where they held a sit-in. AT leaders said that the amendments were solely aimed at bringing over six million acres of barren lands in Punjab under cultivation “by trampling over rights of Sindh on the River Indus”. They held the move “more dangerous than One Unit” and described it as a “black law in making”. 13,00,000 acres of Sindh’s land was being grabbed in the name of projects and plans like corporate farming and, Irsa Act was being amended to gain full control of the Indus. (*Dawn, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Rallies held across Sindh against proposed amendments to Irsa Act***

Rallies and demonstrations were held under the title of ‘Sindhu Darya Bachayo Tehreek (Save Indus River Movement)’ in almost all cities and towns of Sindh in response to a call given by the Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA) against proposed amendments to Irsa Act, 1992. GDA termed the proposed amendments “death warrant for Sindh’, and totally rejected all moves in this regard. (*Dawn, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Nationalist parties hold protests in Karachi against proposed amendments to Irsa Act***

Awami Tehreek, Awami Workers Party and Jeay Sindh Mahar-Riaz staged protest demonstrations and sit-ins outside the Karachi Press Club and several other cities and towns of Sindh against plans for new canals and dams over the Indus River. They said the amendments would allow the federal authorities to build 30 dams, thus threatening Sindh’s share in the Indus water. (*Dawn, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

## **15.2 # Climate and Environment**

### ***Environmental activists demand ban on use of coal as fuel***

To put across their demand to end use of coal as fuel, environmental and human rights activists of the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum held a rally from the Governor House to the Karachi Press Club. They called for declaring a climate emergency and banning the use of coal. (*The News, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 14*)

### ***Literati, civil society resolve to protect entire heritage site of Karoonjhar Hills***

A large number of poets, writers, rights activists and common people coming from different parts of Sindh registered their strong protest against provincial government’s decision to allow granite extraction at the heritage site of Karoonjhar Hills. The call for the gathering at the foothills of Karoonjhar, under the banner of “I am custodian of Karoonjhar”, was given by Sindhi Adabi Sangat, which strongly opposes quarrying at certain points of site. Protesters were carrying banners and placards inscribed with slogans of “complete preservation & protection of Karoonjhar Hills”. (*Dawn, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)



### ***Climate marches in different cities***

Climate activists, farmers and trade union workers staged demos and rallies in different cities ahead of the UN General Assembly session on existential threat posed by sea level rise, to demand \$5 trillion in climate finance from the Global North, the main culprit behind climate change. A press release issued by the Pakistan Kisan Rabita Committee says climate marches and rallies were organised in Gujranwala, Karachi and Shikarpur, joined by members of the Labour Qaumi Movement, PKRC, Textile Power-loom Garments Workers Union, Hari Jedojehad Committee, Pakistan Railway Workers Union, and Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum.

The participants demanded that the Global North must allocate \$5 trillion in climate finance to check, if not reverse, the climate change process. They said the rich countries, that historically owe their development to emissions of carbon, must pay their fair share to counter the climate crisis around the globe, particularly in Pakistan that's most vulnerable in the world. During the first half of the year, 568 people died in six days due to heat stroke in southern Pakistan, they pointed out while mentioning the climate change effect on the country. (*Dawn, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***Activists rally to highlight impact of climate change***

A large number of fisherfolk women, climate activists, and human rights advocates took part in a rally organised by the Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD) and the Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum (PFF). The rally, which began from Governor House roundabout, ended at the Karachi Press Club. Other similar rallies were staged across Asia ahead of the UN General Assembly with a demand for \$5 trillion aid for climate finance. (*Dawn, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

## **15.3 # Education Sector**

### ***Protesting IIUI students demand hostel allocations***

Scores of students from International Islamic University Islamabad staged a protest demonstration against university administration for not allotting them hostels. Protest was staged in front of the National Press Club. The protesters alleged that during the summer break the university after breaking locks of their hostel rooms had thrown out their belongings. They said for the last three days, many students had been living under the open sky as the university was not providing them rooms in the hostel. They also stated that the university had been facing administrative issues for last many years, but administration was targeting boarding students. (*Dawn, September 2nd, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***MUET hostelites hold sit-in against power outages***

Students living in the hostels of Mehran University of Engineering and Technology (MUET), Jamshoro, staged a sit-in at the main gate, protesting against prolonged power outages they have been facing for over a week. Chanting slogans against the university administration, the protesters highlighted the severe inconvenience caused by the frequent and unexplained power cuts. (*Dawn, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Urdu varsity staff members block road in protest over salary and pension delays***

The ongoing unrest at the Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science, and Technology (FUUAST) intensified when a significant number of teachers and non-teaching staff blocked University Road in protest against prolonged delay in salaries, dues, pensions, and withdrawal of the rental ceiling allowance. The protest followed a general body meeting at university's Gulshan-i-Iqbal campus, where staff members unanimously passed a resolution to boycott academic and administrative work until their demands were met. (*Dawn, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 14*)

### ***Readers protest lack of facilities at Larkana's only women's library***

A number of women staged a demonstration outside Begum Nusrat Bhutto Library, the only library for women in Larkana, in protest against lack of basic facilities and an increasingly unhelpful environment at library. (*Dawn, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Activists demand lifting of ban on student unions***

Highlighting a host of issues plaguing the education sector, particularly in Sindh, senior teachers, students, and civil society activists representing different institutions demanded the immediate lifting of the ban on student unions and due representation of students on university statutory bodies. They were speaking at a press conference organised by Concerned Citizens' Alliance (CAA) at press club. They also expressed serious reservations about the annual increase in tuition fees, stating that many deserving students, particularly at Karachi University (KU), were either forced to forgo university admissions or abandon their studies due to financial constraints. "We demand an immediate 50 per cent reduction in student fees and a significant increase in point buses," said Jaswant Singh, a law student at KU, representing the Progressive Students' Front. (*Dawn, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 14*)

### ***Protest***

Students of a government girls primary school in Arang area of Utmanikhel tehsil protested against shortage of teachers other day. The students chanted slogans against the education department and the local lawmakers. They claimed there were only two posts of teachers in the school where currently over 400 students were enrolled. (*Dawn, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Teachers protest outsourcing of schools***

Teachers from Rawalpindi Division, under platform of Grand Teachers Alliance staged a protest against the privatisation of government schools and seeking resolution of other problems. A large number of male and female teachers from Rawalpindi, Murree, Attock, Chakwal and Jhelum districts took part in the protest in front the press club in Rawalpindi. The teachers carried banners and placards against the privatisation of schools. (*Dawn, September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***Students protest paper leak***

A large number of students, who had taken MDCAT examination, staged a demonstration outside local press club, urging the government to conduct it afresh as the paper had been leaked ahead of the exam. (*Dawn, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Punjab teachers stage sit-in outside Civil Secretariat***

Hundreds of teachers under the banner of the Grand Teachers Alliance (GTA) Punjab staged a massive protest and sit-in outside the Civil Secretariat, demanding reversal of various ‘controversial’ policies introduced by the Punjab government. Teachers from across the province rallied to express concerns at the government’s failure to implement agreements made with them in the past. The protest, led by the Punjab Teachers Union (PTU) and prominent GTA leaders had several key demands, including a review of the new school timetable, cancellation of the privatisation of 13,000 public schools being handed over to the NGOs and a revision of anomalies in service and promotion rules. (*Dawn, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***KU student bodies protest against fee hike, other issues***

A large number of students staged a demonstration inside the University of Karachi against fee hike, exorbitant penalty on late fee payment, non-existent transport facility, shrinking number of teaching staff, depleting infrastructure of the varsity and deteriorating security situation on the campus and warned of expanding the protest if their concerns weren’t addressed. (*Dawn, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***Teachers observe token strike***

Hundreds of teachers, under the banner of Punjab Grand Teachers Alliance (GTA) observed a token strike in different schools of the province to press the government for the acceptance of their demands. Earlier, the GTA ended the sit-in outside the Civil Secretariat, that had been continuing for the last two days, and announced a token strike and boycott of classes by the teachers in the schools across the province. The teachers are demanding reversal of ‘controversial’ policies introduced by Punjab government. (*Dawn, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 2*)

### ***OPF teachers seek better salaries, perks***

Teachers serving in educational institutions of Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF) staged protest to press the government and OPF to resolve their issues. A number of teachers gathered outside the National Press Club, holding placards in their hands and raising slogans in favour of their demands. The protesters said there were disparities in salary and allowances between OPF school/college employees and their counterparts at the OPF head office. In addition, they urged the government to regularise OPF schools under the federal system, pushing for payscale upgrades, timely promotions and the disbursement of 25pc ad-hoc relief announced by the federal government. Improving working conditions and access to better educational resources also featured prominently in their list of demands. (*Dawn, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

## **15.4 # Energy Sector**

### ***Peshawar residents protest power cuts***

Power consumers belonging to Tehkal and Nauthia areas of the provincial capital staged separate demonstrations against prolonged electric loadshedding and demanded an end to the unscheduled outage. The people, who had blocked the University Road, were carrying placards and banners. (*Dawn, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***Protest over power outages causes gridlock in Karachi***

Thousands of commuters & motorists remained stuck in multiple traffic jams on several key thoroughfares after residents of Punjab Colony and Gizri took to streets and blocked both tracks of main road leading towards Boat Basin and Sunset Boulevard in protest over prolonged power outages in their area. (*Dawn, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***Jl workers stage rallies in Peshawar against heavy electricity tariffs, taxes***

Jamat-i-Islami workers staged rallies against heavy electricity tariffs and taxes, and asked the government to scrap the contracts with the Independent Power Producers to bring down power rates in the country. (*Dawn, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

## **15.5 # Peace and/or Militancy**

### ***Families of missing persons hold protest in Quetta***

The families and relatives of missing persons staged a rally in the provincial capital to observe the International Day of the Disappeared. The protesters, including women and children, gathered at the Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP) camp near the Quetta Press Club and before marching on the Adalat road. They were carrying posters of their missing relatives and chanted slogans before gathering in front of the press club. (*Dawn, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### ***Mehsud tribe's sit-in continues for sixth day***

The Mehsud tribesmen continued their sit-in in Moley Khan Sarai area of Upper South Waziristan tribal district for the sixth day, demanding establishment of durable peace in the region, making functional a key hospital and provision of internet services to the residents. (*Dawn, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***Protest in GB over 'misuse' of ATA, cybercrime laws***

The Gilgit-Baltistan Awami Action Committee organised a protest rally against the misuse of Anti-Terrorism Act and cybercrime laws, saying these laws are being used by the government to silence the voice of people against injustices in the area and to curb freedom of expression. The participants of the rally marched on the River View road and assembled at the Central Press Club of Gilgit where the committee leaders addressed the participants of the rally. (*Dawn, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### ***Strike over mobile shop burglary enters sixth day***

A shutdown strike in several cities and towns of Khairpur and Naushahro Feroze districts entered sixth day as the Gambat police failed to apprehend a gang of thieves

that took away merchandise worth millions of rupees from a wholesale shop of mobile phones and accessories in the city during night hours. The strike call was given by an association of mobile phone traders and enforced by mobile markets' unions in their respective cities and towns. (*Dawn, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***National Highway blocked in Jacobabad district in protest against 'extrajudicial' murder of youth***

A large number of enraged people blocked sections of National Highway in Jacobabad district and Tangwani against killing of a young man by police. In Jacobabad, a large number of people belonging to the Jakhrani community placed the body of the youth at the Jacobabad bypass and staged a demonstration against police for killing the youth allegedly in a fake encounter. (*Dawn, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Family members of 'missing persons' in Quetta stage sit-in***

Family members of missing persons staged a sit-in against the failure of law-enforcement agencies to recover their loved ones despite continued protests. Family members of Jahanzeb Baloch and political activists gathered in the camp of Voice for the Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP) at the Adalat Road and took out a protest rally. The participants of the rally marched up to Quetta Press Club carrying banners, placards and portraits of the missing persons. They raised slogans against the government. (*Dawn, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### ***Police officials block Indus Highway in Tajazai against militant attacks***

Militant attacks on police in Lakki Marwat district led to street protests, with hundreds of police officials staging a demonstration in the Tajazai area. The protesters, mostly in civvies, gathered at police lines in the District Headquarters Complex and condemned militant attacks and discussed the future course of action. They later marched on the Lakki-Tajazai Road and staged a protest sit-in at the Lt Adnan Shaheed Chowk, popularly known as Tajazai Chowk, demanding peace. The protesters blocked the busy Indus Highway, suspending traffic between Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the country's southern parts. (*Dawn, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***Civil society protest extrajudicial killing of Umerkot blasphemy suspect***

Activists of civil society organisations from across the province participated in a protest which was led, among others, by daughter of blasphemy suspect Dr Shahnawaz Kunbhar, who was allegedly killed by police in a staged encounter last week. The protest demonstration was held in front of the Umerkot Press Club. The protesters chanted slogans 'Soil of Sindh needs peace' and 'The land of peace needs peace'. (*Dawn, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Protest continues in Kandhkot against 'bandit rule'***

The protest launched by All Parties Movement in Kandhkot a day before over unbridled crimes across Kandhkot-Kashmore district continued on the second day running when a large number of members of political, nationalist, religious and social organisations

and rights activists took part in a procession for peace. The local alliance of different parties and groups had started the agitation in the wake of reports the town's business community was receiving threatening chits from bandits with demands for payment of protection money. Waving white flags, the protesters started the procession from local press club against rising crimes of robbery, kidnapping, theft and extortion from business community, and reached Clock Tower after marching on different roads where the leaders made speeches. (*Dawn, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Swat protesters oppose military operations***

Scores of people took out a rally in Mingora here against terrorism and opposed military operations. They insisted that terrorist activities in the region were “state-sponsored and artificial” and warned that if the state didn't eliminate terrorism, the residents of Swat would take “matters into their own hands to defend their homeland.” The rally, organised by Swat Qaumi Jirga at Nishat Chowk, was attended by the representatives of political parties, Swat Lawyers' Association, transport associations, trader federations, private schools association, teacher unions, and local communities. Youth, students, and a few women from legal profession also participated in the protest, which was staged under the slogan “Eliminate Artificial Terrorism, No to Military Operations, and Demand Durable Peace in Swat”. (*Dawn, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***S. Waziristan sit-in against shelling continues***

Mehsud tribesmen and political parties continued their protest sit-in at Makeen bazaar in Upper South Waziristan district on the second consecutive day to protest against shelling and firing on populated areas by the security forces, causing unrest and loss of precious cattle. They demanded that the security forces, while acting against militants, should avoid indiscriminate firing and shelling on populated areas that put innocent lives at risk and caused fear and anxiety among the local residents. The protesters said that they were not supporters of militants and wanted peace in the area, but the indiscriminate firing by the security forces was unjustified. They also demanded of the government to take action against the terrorists and not against the innocent civilians. (*Dawn, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

## **15.6 # Pro – Palestinian Factions**

### ***Pakistan 'stands with Lebanon' after Nasrallah's assassination***

As Pakistan urged United Nations to restrain Israel from 'adventurism' and violations of international law, thousands of people took to the streets across the country to protest the killing of Hassan Nasrallah — the Hezbollah leader who perished in an Israeli air strike in Beirut last week. A statement issued by Foreign Office denounced the growing Israeli adventurism in Middle East and said its unbridled attacks on civilian populations and disregard of international law had reached alarming levels. (*Dawn, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 3*)

### ***People take to streets against police in Mirpurkhas, Dadu***

A large number of people took to the streets in Mirpurkhas and Dadu in protest against increasing incidents of street crime and police failure to establish its writ. (*Dawn, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***MWM's rally turns violent in Karachi***

A protest rally arranged by Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen attempting to march towards the US Consulate turned into violent, prompting police to take strict action. Following martyrdom of Hassan Nasrallah, different politico-religious parties staged protest in different parts of the country including Karachi. Law enforcers resorted to baton charge, tear gas shelling, and aerial firing to disperse the protesters, as MWM rally attempted to march towards US Consulate. (*Business Recorder, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### ***Pakistan: thousands protest killing of Hassan Nasrallah***

Thousands of people protested in various cities after the Iran-backed group Hezbollah confirmed that its longtime chief had been killed by an Israeli air strike in Lebanon. Around 4,000 people gathered in Islamabad and 3,000 thousands in the Karachi during rallies and funeral prayers for Nasrallah led by Shia groups. (*Business Recorder, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

## **15.7 # Workers' Voice**

### ***Over dozen PWD protesters taken into custody***

The capital police picked up over a dozen protesters after they created law and order situation on one of the main arteries of the capital. The PWD employees have been staging demonstrations for the last couple of days and during the protest they blocked Srinagar Highway, however, every time, the police succeeded to get them removed from the highway and reopened it after negotiations. The capital administration also gave a deadline to the protesters to disperse from the spot and a police contingent was deployed around the PWD office to maintain law and order.

However, the protesters again reached Srinagar Highway and blocked it from both sides, the police said, adding that efforts were made to remove them from the highway in a peaceful manner, but some of them started pelting the police with stones. In response physical confrontation started between the officials and protesters following which the police resorted to baton charge. The police also fired teargas shells and used other anti-riot gear, forcing the protesters to disperse from the road. Some of the protesters were also taken into custody. (*Dawn, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 4*)

### ***LG workers' union plans march to Karachi***

Members of Shah Latif Local Government Employees Union of local bodies staged a protest at the Bhuttos' mausoleum in Garhi Khuda Bakhsh Bhutto and warned of launching a march to Karachi to force the government to accept their charter of demands. The employees hailing from Larkana and Sukkur divisions assembled outside

the gate of the mausoleum and urged the government to accept the 17-point charter of demands which they had submitted a couple of days back in a meeting with Secretary Local Government Syed Khalid Haider Shah. The union leaders said in their speeches before the protesters that the march would reach Nawabshah on Sept 22, Bhitshah on 23rd, Hyderabad on 24th, Thatta on 25th and on Sept 26 the employees would demonstrate outside Karachi Press club. (*Dawn, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 15*)

### ***Workers warn govt of protest if minimum wage notification not issued***

Labour leaders and rights activists demanded that provincial government immediately issue the official notification for the minimum wage and withdraw the proposed Sindh Labour Code forthwith. They declared that if the minimum wage notification was not issued within a week, workers would stage a protest sit-in in front of the Sindh Assembly. A large number of workers, including women, and leaders from labour and human rights organisations attended the event. The conference witnessed strong condemnation from labour leaders against the Sindh government's anti-labour stance. They pointed out that despite the passage of three months, the Sindh government had failed to issue the official notification for the minimum wage, affecting millions of workers and their families. (*Dawn, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 13*)

### ***PDA employees block road, BRT corridor***

Employees of the Peshawar Development Authority (PDA) took to the streets, accusing ruling PTI's lawmakers of attempting to stop the ongoing crackdown on encroachments in the Ring Road area. (*Dawn, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)

### ***Hospital employees protest***

Employees of Sholam Hospital staged a demonstration to protest against non-payment of their salaries and boycotted all medical departments including emergency services. The protesters marched through the hospital, shouting slogans against the provincial government and the health department. They demanded of the authorities concerned to release their salaries without delay, warning that their protest campaign would be expanded if their demand was not met. (*Dawn, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 8*)



# INTERNATIONAL NEWS

## 1 # AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES

*Not any preferable news to be included in this month.*

## 2 # AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

*Not any preferable news to be included in this month.*

## 3 # AGRICULTURAL OUTPUTS

*Not any preferable news to be included in this month.*

## 4 # SUB – AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIONS

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# INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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## 1 # AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESOURCES

*Not any preferable news to be included in this month.*

## 2 # AGRICULTURAL INPUTS

*Not any preferable news to be included in this month.*

## 3 # AGRICULTURAL OUTPUTS

*Not any preferable news to be included in this month.*

## 4 # SUB – AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIONS

### ***Nine Indian fishermen feared dead after trawler capsizes***

Nine Indian fishermen are feared dead after their trawler capsized in the Bay of Bengal during a storm. The trawler had left from the Sundarbans in West Bengal with 17 men on board, said Surajit Bag, assistant director of fishing in the state government. Eight were on the deck while nine others were asleep in the cabin below when the storm struck near Bagher Char island. (*Dawn, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

## 5 # TRADE

### ***China, South Africa agree to seek balanced trade, more investments***

China and South Africa, whose top leaders met in Beijing, agreed to promote balanced trade and discussed boosting two-way investments between their industrial and commercial communities. President Xi Jinping and his South African counterpart Cyril Ramaphosa met, ahead of the ninth forum on China-Africa cooperation. Ramaphosa had sought with Xi to narrow South Africa's trade deficit with Beijing and review his country's trade structure with China, petitioning for more sustainable manufacturing and job-creating investments. China, the world's second-biggest economy, is South Africa's largest trading partner globally but the value of its imports from China far outstripped exports last year. The statement also mentions adding manufacturing bases near the source of relevant raw materials, and promoting transfer of technology and skills among their businesses. China was also willing to share more of its experience in poverty reduction and rural revitalisation, according to the statement published by the Chinese foreign ministry. (*Business Recorder, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### ***India, UAE set to review trade deal***

Indian and Emirati officials are expected to review their trade agreement this week amid concerns raised by Indian industry over a sharp increase in imports of precious metals from UAEs, people familiar with matter said. India and the UAE signed Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement in 2022 after just 88 days of negotiations. Agreement has become a template for similar trade pacts the UAE has since signed with many other nations. India is one of UAE's largest trading partners and Indian citizens make up largest community in Gulf state, outnumbering Emiratis. (*Business Recorder, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***Global trade helped reduce extreme poverty, inequality: WTO***

A new World Trade Organisation (WTO) report has stated that global commerce has played a critical role in reducing extreme poverty from 40pc to 11pc. Global trade has created “shared prosperity” since the WTO was created in 1995, while calling for supportive policies to “mainstream more economies” and people across the globe.

World Trade Report 2024, released, said world had witnessed a period of unprecedented income growth. “Between 1995 and 2023, global per capita income, adjusted for inflation, increased by approximately 65 per cent, while the per capita income of low- and middle-income economies almost tripled.” This “impressive economic growth” significantly contributed to reducing poverty, malnutrition and infant mortality, and improved access to education, healthcare and electricity.

The report also raised concerns over persisting income inequalities, which are still high in most economies, as 712 million people were still living in extreme poverty. The report also noted that between 1995 and 2022, the share of low and middle-income economies in global trade grew from 21pc to 38pc, while the share of trade between developing economies in global commerce almost quadrupled, increasing from 5pc in 1995 to 19pc in 2021. However, this “economic convergence” is threatened by geopolitical tensions, technological revolution and climate change.

The report also pointed out the challenges faced by low- and middle-income economies that engage less in international trade, receive less FDI, rely more on commodities, export less complex products, and trade tend to be concentrated among fewer partners. Among the reasons these economies are not benefiting from globalisation are high tariffs at home and abroad, low regional integration, administrative red tape, poor physical and digital infrastructure, geographical remoteness and weak institutions. The report also noted that some of the economies that are an active participant in global trade failed to leverage trade for development due to a lack of diversification in their production and export baskets. (*Dawn, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### **5.1 # Exports**

#### ***Vietnam’s export hub factories may face disruption after Typhoon Yagi***

Typhoon Yagi severely damaged a large number of factories and flooded warehouses in northern Vietnam’s export-oriented industrial hubs, forcing plants to shut, with some expected to take weeks to resume full operations. The disruptions could affect global supply chains as Vietnam hosts large operations of multinationals that mostly export their products to United States, Europe and other developed countries. In the coastal city of Haiphong, one of the areas worst hit by the typhoon, 95% of businesses were expected to resume some activities, the body managing Haiphong industrial zones said. (*Business Recorder, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

### ***India removes floor price for basmati rice exports to claw back global share***

India removed a floor price for basmati rice exports to help farmers struggling with debt and higher costs boost overseas sales of the premium grade just weeks ahead of the arrival of the new-season crop. Last year New Delhi set a floor price, or minimum export price (MEP), of \$1,200 a metric ton and later cut the MEP to \$950 a ton. As supplies picked up since then, exporters urged government to either cut or remove the MEP to ensure that farmers do not get saddled with large stocks when the new crop arrives in a month's time. Reuters in July reported that India was likely to cut the floor price for basmati rice exports. Thousands of impoverished and indebted farmers complain about falling incomes and soaring fuel and fertiliser prices.

India and Pakistan, the only growers of basmati, both try to promote the premium grade of rice in a manner similar to French Champagne or Darjeeling tea. Basmati is not widely consumed in India, and the government does not buy the variety to build state reserves, unlike common grades of rice. There is a big overseas market for basmati varieties that are priced around \$700 a ton, so it was a logical move to remove the MEP altogether. New Delhi exports 4 million to 5 million metric tons of basmati to countries such as Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and the United States. Europe is another big market for the rice. Separately, India removed the MEP on onions. (*Business Recorder, September 14<sup>th</sup> 2024, Page 8*)

### ***India considers easing export curbs on non-basmati rice***

India is considering easing curbs on non-basmati rice exports, as inventories in world's biggest exporter of the grain surged and farmers are set to harvest a new crop in the coming weeks. India imposed various curbs on rice exports in 2023 and continued them in 2024 to keep local prices in check ahead of the April-June national elections. In July, Reuters reported that India was considering replacing the 20% export tax on parboiled rice with a fixed duty on overseas shipments, and New Delhi was also examining the possibility of resuming white rice exports.

Buoyed by copious monsoon rains, farmers have planted rice on 4.1 million hectares, up from 3.9 million hectares last year and 4 million hectares of the past five years of the average area under the staple. Rice stocks at the Food Corporation of India on Sept. 1 stood at 32.3 million metric tons, 38.6% higher than last year, giving the government plenty of elbow room to consider relaxing rice export curbs. Easing rice export curbs could help Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) mollify angry farmers in Haryana, where voters will elect a new state assembly on Oct. 5, and in the western state of Maharashtra, where elections are due later this year. The BJP lost nearly 75 rural seats in this year's general elections. (*Business Recorder, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 18*)

### ***India allows non-basmati rice exports***

India allowed exports of non-basmati white rice exports as inventories in the world's biggest exporter of the grain surged and farmers are set to harvest a new crop in the

coming weeks. New Delhi set a floor price for non-basmati exports at \$490 per tonne. India reduced export duty on parboiled rice to 10 per cent from 20pc earlier, a move that will lower its export prices, boost shipments and force competing countries like Thailand, Vietnam, Pakistan, and Myanmar to reduce their prices as well. India imposed various curbs on rice exports in 2023 and continued them in 2024 to keep local prices in check ahead of April-June national elections. (*Dawn, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

## **6 # CORPORATE SECTOR**

*Not any preferable news to be included in this month.*

## **7 # INTERNATIONAL AID / LOAN / INVESTMENT**

### ***China promises \$50bn for Africa over three years***

Chinese leader Xi Jinping pledged over \$50bn in financing for Africa over the next three years, promising to deepen cooperation in infrastructure and trade with continent as he addressed Beijing's biggest summit since pandemic. More than 50 African leaders and UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres are attending this week's China-Africa forum. African leaders already secured a plethora of deals this week for greater cooperation in infrastructure, agriculture, mining, trade and energy. Over next three years, Chinese government is willing to provide financial support amounting to 360bn yuan (\$50.7bn). Over half of that will be in credit, with \$11bn "in various types of assistance" as well as \$10bn through encouraging Chinese firms to invest.

He also promised to help "create at least one million jobs for Africa". China, world's number two economy, is Africa's largest trading partner and has sought to tap continent's vast troves of natural resources including copper, gold, lithium and rare earth minerals. It has also furnished African countries with billions in loans that have helped build much-needed infrastructure but sometimes stoked controversy by saddling governments with huge debts. Nigeria and China inked a joint statement agreeing to "deepen cooperation" in infrastructure, including "transportation, ports and free trade zones". (*Dawn, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***US to give Bangladesh \$202m in aid***

The United States is committed to supporting Bangladesh's inclusive economic growth, institution building and development and will provide an additional \$202m of aid, a US delegation said during a visit to Dhaka. Chief Adviser Yunus said the government was appealing for \$5bn in aid to help stabilise an economy that has been struggling since the Ukraine war sharply increased cost of fuel and food imports. Bangladesh last year sought a \$4.7bn bailout from IMF. USAID said it would provide a \$202m grant to promote good governance, social, human & Z economic opportunity and resilience, in a deal signed in Dhaka. It follows a 2021 agreement where USAID pledged a total of \$954m between 2021 & 2026, of which \$425m had already been provided. (*Dawn, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

## **8 # INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (IFIs)**

### **8.1 # Asian Development Bank (ADB)**

#### ***ADB unveils roadmap for climate, development***

ADB has approved an ambitious new roadmap to guide its evolution and scale up its support on key challenges facing Asia and the Pacific, including accelerated efforts to combat climate change and expand private sector development. The Mid-term Review of ADB Strategy 2030 — an update of its corporate strategy — outlines how the bank will transform in a rapidly changing development landscape and respond to challenges threatening its vision for a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable region. The review sharpened ADB’s strategic focus and set new corporate targets in key areas. It will deepen its focus on five of the region’s most pressing development issues: climate action, private sector development, regional cooperation and public goods, digital transformation, and resilience and empowerment. (*Dawn, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

#### ***Israel joins ADB as 69th member***

Israel has become the newest non-regional member of the Asian Development Bank, the Philippines-based lender announced, with an analyst cautioning that the move might cause “polarisation” in the institution. The bank’s board of governors had approved Israel’s entry in April 2022 pending its completion of the membership requirements. The bank now has 69 members, with Japan and United States the major contributors to its capital, at more than \$22.23 billion apiece. (*Dawn, September 28th, 2024, Page 10*)

### **8.2 # International Monetary Fund (IMF)**

#### ***Cash-strapped Maldives rules out IMF bailout***

The Maldives says its financial troubles are “temporary” and the luxury tourist destination has no plans to seek an International Monetary Fund bailout after warnings of a possible sovereign default. Foreign minister Moosa Zameer said the Indian Ocean archipelago, best known for its upscale resorts and celebrity visitors, was pressing ahead with tax hikes to meet its debt servicing obligations. He said tax reforms, along with the rationalisation of state-owned enterprises, would improve liquidity. Zameer was visiting Sri Lanka along with Finance Minister Mohamed Shafeeq to meet with local central bankers and other officials. China and India are the two largest bilateral lenders to the Maldives, a tiny nation of 1,192 tiny coral islands in the Indian Ocean scattered across the equator. (*Dawn, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### **8.3 # World Bank (WB)**

#### ***World Bank boosts climate financing by 10pc***

The World Bank announced that it delivered a record \$42.6bn in climate change financing in last financial year, up 10% from a year earlier. In December, the bank committed to raising proportion of its annual financing that goes to climate change adaptation from 35pc to 45pc starting in fiscal 2025 year, which began in July. But it came close to that objective this fiscal year, announcing in a statement that around 44pc



of World Bank Group's total financing of \$97bn had a climate financing component. This figure included lending, along with other financial instruments such as grants and guarantees. That financing assisted in "supporting efforts to end poverty on a livable planet, investing in cleaner energy, more resilient communities, and stronger economies," adding: "There is more to do." Largest contributors were the International Development Association, the bank's concessional lending arm, and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which together delivered \$31 billion. (*Dawn, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

## 9 # POLICY

*Not any preferable news to be included in this month.*

## 10 # SOCIO – ECONOMICAL CONDITION

### ***Bangladesh struggling to muster dollars to pay Indian power debts, sources say***

Bangladesh's efforts to clear debts of more than \$1 billion owed to Indian power companies are being hampered by its inability to access the dollars it requires to pay them, documents showed and sources familiar with the matter said. The country has been struggling to pay its bills due to costly fuel and goods imports since the war in Ukraine began in 2022, while political turmoil which led to the ouster of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in August has added to its troubles. Bangladesh is urgently seeking \$5bn in financial aid from international lenders to stabilise its dwindling foreign exchange reserves and its central bank has raised key interest rates to tame soaring inflation. Last year, it sought a \$4.7bn bailout from IMF. (*Dawn, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

### ***Global debt hits record \$312trn: IIF***

Global debt hit a record high of \$312 trillion at the end of the second quarter, driven by borrowing in the United States and China, while a key debt ratio in emerging markets also scaled a fresh peak, data from a banking trade group showed. The Institute of International Finance (IIF), a financial services trade group, said that global debt rose by 2.1 trillion in the first half to \$312 trillion - a new high point after previous data was revised lower. The IIF flashed warning signs on the trend of ever-increasing government borrowing in its latest Global Debt Monitor report, forecasting global government borrowing would rise from its current level of \$92 trillion to \$145 trillion by 2030 and top \$440 trillion by 2050. A big chunk of the borrowing was driven by energy transition in the face of climate change which was expected to account for over a third of the projected rise by 2050. (*Business Recorder, September 26<sup>th</sup>, Page 1*)

## 10.1 # Food

### ***Over one billion tonnes of food wasted daily in 2022: UN report***

While 783 million people were affected by hunger and a third of humanity faced food insecurity, over one billion meals a day were wasted across all continents in 2022, according to the 'Food Waste Index Report 2024', released by UN Environment Programme to mark the 'International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste'. In

2022, there were 1.05 billion tonnes of food waste generated, including inedible parts, amounting to 132 kilograms per capita and almost one-fifth of all food available to consumers. “Food waste is a global tragedy. Millions will go hungry today as food is wasted across the world,” said UNEP executive director Inger Andersen. According to recent data, food loss and waste generates eight to 10pc of annual global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions — almost five times that of the aviation sector — and significant biodiversity loss by taking up the equivalent of almost a third of the world’s agricultural land. The toll of both food loss and waste on the global economy is estimated at roughly \$1 trillion. (*Dawn, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

## **10.2 # Inflation**

### ***Eurozone inflation falls to three-year low in August***

Eurozone inflation fell to its lowest level in more than three years this month thanks to falling energy costs, raising expectations of a European Central Bank interest-rate cut. Consumer price rises slowed to 2.2 percent in August compared to the same month last year after reaching 2.6 percent in July, closing in on the European Central Bank’s two-percent target. Core inflation, which strips out volatile energy, food, alcohol and tobacco prices and is a key indicator for the bank, cooled slightly to 2.8 percent in August from 2.9 percent in July. (*Business Recorder, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

## **11 # ENVIRONMENT**

### ***Six S. Asian states transporting plastic pollution: WB***

Highlighting that plastic pollution is a regional problem in South Asia, a newly released World Bank report blames six countries of region for facilitating transport of pollution across borders such as solid waste including plastics, industrial effluents, domestic waste water and microplastics through 20 major rivers. Besides rivers and other cross-border environmental issues like air pollution, these countries share similar socioeconomic and solid waste sectoral challenges. The two major transboundary river basins, Ganges-Brahmaputra Meghna (GBM, that includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal) and the Indus River basin (including Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan) are highlighted due to their high leakage rates.

The report, `Waves of Plastics: A Snapshot of Marine Plastic Pollution in South Asia`, sought to establish a comprehensive baseline of plastic waste flow into water bodies in the region and aims to support the formulation of evidence based policies and strategies for plastic pollution reduction and a transition toward a regional circular economy framework for plastics. According to the report, there is currently little focus on reducing plastic production and improving the collection, separation, and recycling of plastic waste. (*Dawn, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### ***The Hague to ban fossil fuel ads***

The Dutch city of The Hague has become the first in the world to pass local laws banning advertisements for fossil fuels, petrol cars and long-distance air travel. The

administrative city of over 500,000 residents adopted ground-breaking local legislation to outlaw ads, including for cheap last-minute holidays and cut-price electricity contracts. The law comes into effect on Jan 1. (*Dawn, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Ship with 20,000 litres of diesel fuel sinks off Greenland***

A ship carrying 20,000 litres of diesel fuel ran aground and sank off Greenland’s coast, said authorities who were working to contain a potential spill in the fragile Arctic ecosystem. Authorities believe the 30-metre (98-foot) ship contained some 15,000 to 20,000 litres (3,963 to 5,283 gallons) of diesel fuel in its tanks, in addition to 1,000 litres of engine oil. (*Dawn, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

## **12 # CLIMATE CHANGE**

### ***World sees record August heat for second year running***

The world saw record average temperatures in August for the second year running, according to preliminary data from the EU’s climate monitor. While the exact average temperature for August 2024 is not yet known, the Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) has already established it will be above the then-record 16.82 degrees Celsius (62.28 Fahrenheit) measured in August last year. Scientists warn that these unprecedented temperatures are in large part driven by man-made climate change, which is causing more frequent and intense extreme weather events.

Only July 2024 was measured by C3S to be slightly cooler than July 2023, though the US NOAA weather agency believes July 2024 to be the hottest month on record. Either way, 2023 was the world’s warmest year since weather data keeping began in the 19th century. And at the beginning of August, C3S had already warned that it was “increasingly likely” 2024 would surpass it. (*Dawn, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***‘June-Aug hottest ever recorded’***

The 2024 northern summer saw highest global temperatures on record, beating 2023’s high and making this year likely Earth’s hottest ever recorded. Data from the Copernicus Climate Change Service followed a season of heatwaves around the world that scientists said were intensified by human-driven climate change. Extreme weather struck around the globe — with some 1,300 dead during extreme heat at Haj in Makkah, intense heat testing India’s economy and electric system, and wildfire raging in parts of the western United States.

“During the past three months of 2024, the globe has experienced the hottest June and August, the hottest day on record, and the hottest boreal summer on record,” Samantha Burgess, deputy director of Copernicus, said in a report. “This string of record temperatures is increasing the likelihood of 2024 being the hottest year on record.” The average global temperature at the Earth’s surface was 16.82C in August, according to Copernicus, which draws on billions of measurements from satellites, ships, aircraft and weather stations. (*Dawn, September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***Indonesia's Prabowo plans \$65bn green fund from selling carbon credits***

Indonesia's President-elect Prabowo Subianto plans to launch a green economy fund by selling carbon emission credits from projects such as rainforest preservation, aiming to raise \$65bn by 2028. A new regulator for carbon emission rules will be established to oversee efforts to reach Indonesia's emissions targets under Paris agreement, said Ferry Latuhihin, one of Prabowo's advisers on climate policies. (*Business Recorder, September 14<sup>th</sup>, Page 4*)

### ***AI is 'accelerating the climate crisis', expert warns***

If you care about the environment, think twice about using AI. Generative artificial intelligence uses 30 times more energy than a traditional search engine. AI programmes "generate new information," making the whole thing "much more energy-intensive". According to International Energy Agency, combined AI and cryptocurrency sectors consumed nearly 460 terawatt hours of electricity in 2022 — two per cent of total global production. (*Dawn, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Vast French project abandoned over fears of sea level rise***

An ambitious housing project in the northwestern French city of Caen has run aground over worries that rising waters driven by climate change could make the area unlivable within the century. Conceived in the early 2010s, the development was to transform a strip of industrial wasteland between the River Orne and the canal linking Caen to the sea into 2,300 homes, as well as tens of thousands of square metres of office space. In 2023, just as all the authorisations to start work on the project had been obtained, Tiercelet was alerted by a group of experts tasked with determining impact of climate change on Normandy region. That group's findings were stark enough to convince then-Caen mayor Joel Bruneau to sink development. (*Dawn, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Leaders at climate meeting warn of growing mistrust between nations***

UN Secretary General Antnio Guterres launched a two-day, climate-themed "Summit for the Future" as part of UN General Assembly, where some leaders warned of growing mistrust between nations as climate-fuelled disasters mount. National leaders addressed group after adopting a "Pact for the Future" aimed at ensuring and increasing cooperation between nations, with many calling for urgent access to more climate finance. "International challenges are moving faster than our ability to solve them," Guterres told. Climate Group, which is coordinating Climate Week, counted some 900 climate-related events planned across city this week, hosted by multinational corporations, international non-profits, governments and activists.

Climate summits and events like Climate Week, held alongside UN General Assembly, have taken on a more urgent tone in recent years as rising temperatures fuel increasingly extreme disasters like heatwaves and storms. Some observers to climate negotiations regretted that the global pact adopted by the General Assembly did not go further than last year's COP28 summit in Dubai in affirming a commitment to transition away from fossil fuel use. Countries are showing "collective amnesia" about need to tackle these polluting fuels, a senior associate at climate think tank E3G. Leaders have also been grappling

with a more urgent challenge on climate agenda. There are just two months left until the UN's COP29 climate summit in Baku, Azerbaijan, leaving little time for agreeing on a new global finance target to replace annual \$100bn pledge that expires in 2025. With some UN agencies estimating annual financing need in trillions, leaders are looking beyond their own budgets for ways to boost climate cash. World Bank and other multilateral development banks are undergoing reform processes this year, which could see them making more funding available or taking on more climate-related risk. (*Dawn, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***'Business as usual' will flood Pacific islands, warns Nasa***

Within 30 years, sea levels will rise at least 15 centimetres on several Pacific island nations, regardless of what cuts are made to greenhouse gas emissions, new Nasa analysis shows. Under different emission scenarios, researchers projected sea level rises for Tuvalu, Kiribati, Fiji and Nauru, finding some countries could experience localised flooding a few times a year. Others could be submerged for nearly half a year. Almost the entire country of Tuvalu is vulnerable to flooding, Nasa found. Even under a best-case scenario — if global warming is limited to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels — sea levels will rise 23 centimetres (nine inches) by 2054.

Nasa researcher Ben Hamlington said rising seas vary from region to region, due to melting glaciers or topography of coastlines, but Pacific projections were “surprisingly consistent”. Within the next 30 years under a business-as-usual scenario, rising sea levels across Kiribati and Fiji will reach 27 cm and 28 cm, respectively. By 2100, sea levels could increase by 70 cm across Pacific islands. The researchers drew on flooding data and climate emission projections to determine the sea level inundation. But Hamlington said more on-the-ground data was needed to ensure the most accurate projections, which would allow communities to best prepare for the future. Nearly a billion people worldwide live in low-lying coastal areas, increasingly vulnerable to storm surges, coastal erosion and flooding — while Pacific islands face growing threats to their economic viability and even existence. (*Dawn, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

## **13 # CLIMATE DISASTERS**

### **13.1 # Rainfall / Flood**

#### ***Floods displace nearly 950,000 in west Africa***

Severe flooding in west Africa has displaced nearly 950,000 people and disrupted children's education at the start of school year, international charity Save the Children said. “Hundreds of thousands of children now displaced from their homes are facing disease, hunger from crop destruction, and disruption to their education, as schools have become crowded with fleeing families or damaged in the floods,” the NGO said. Save the Children said around 950,000 people had been displaced — 649,184 in Niger, 225,000 in Nigeria and 73,778 in Mali. Niger's government says more than 700,000 people have been left homeless and 273 people died since rainy season started in June.

Neighbouring Nigeria has meanwhile seen 29 of its 36 states — mostly in the north — hit by rising waters of the River Niger and its major Benue tributary with the country listing 200 deaths, Save the Children said. According to Nigerian government data, over 115,265 hectares of farmland have also been damaged, in a country with already high rates of food insecurity”. The agency said one in every six children across Nigeria faced hunger in June-August this year — a 25 per cent increase on the same period last year. In Mali, whose government declared a state national disaster, more than half of those displaced are children. (*Dawn, September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Myanmar junta seeks foreign aid to cope with floods***

Myanmar’s junta chief made a rare request for foreign aid to cope with deadly floods that have displaced hundreds of thousands of people who have already endured three years of war. Floods and landslides have killed almost 300 people in Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos and Thailand in the wake of Typhoon Yagi, which dumped a colossal deluge of rain when it hit the region last weekend. In Myanmar, more than 235,000 people have been forced from their homes by floods, the junta said, piling further misery on the country where war has raged since the military seized power in 2021. (*Dawn, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Four killed after torrential rain hits Romania***

Four people have died in Romania in floods triggered by Storm Boris, which has brought torrential rains and widespread disruption to central and Eastern Europe. (*Dawn, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***EU chief announces \$11bn for nations hit by ‘heartbreaking’ floods***

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced 10 billion euros (\$11 billion) in funds for member nations reeling from “heartbreaking” devastation after the floods caused by Storm Boris. (*Business Recorder, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 5*)

### ***One killed, seven missing as heavy rains trigger floods in Japan***

One person was killed and at least seven were missing, as “unprecedented” rains triggered floods and landslides in Japan’s quake-hit region of Ishikawa, where authorities told tens of thousands to evacuate. (*Dawn, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***Myanmar flood death toll jumps to 384***

The death toll in Myanmar in the wake of Typhoon Yagi has climbed to 384, with 89 people missing, the junta said. Yagi swept across northern Vietnam, Laos, Thailand and Myanmar more than a week ago, triggering floods and landslides that have killed hundreds of people across the region. (*The News, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, Page 10*)

### ***Chad floods killed 503, 1.7m affected, says UN***

Severe flooding in Chad since July has claimed 503 lives and affected around 1.7 million since July, the United Nations said. The floods have also destroyed 212,111 houses, flooded 357,832 hectares (885,000 acres) of fields and drowned 69,659 heads of cattle. (*The News, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, Page 12*)

### ***Floods, landslides hit central Japan months after major quake***

Floods and landslides killed one person and left at least 11 missing in central Japan, with recovery teams at work in a remote peninsula already devastated by a major earthquake this year. “Unprecedented” heavy rains that lashed the area began to subside, leaving muddy scenes of destruction as national weather agency urged people to stay vigilant for loose ground and other dangers. (*Business Recorder, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

### ***Nepal floods and landslides kill at least 66 people, 69 missing***

At least 66 people have been killed in Nepal as persistent downpours triggered flooding and landslides, closing major roads and disrupting domestic air travel. The death toll could rise with another 69 people reported missing, and 60 injured. Most of the deaths took place in the Kathmandu Valley, which is home to four million people and the country’s capital, where the flooding brought traffic and normal activity to a standstill. Hundreds of people die in the monsoon season every year in the landslides and flash floods common in the mountainous nation. (*Dawn, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***170 dead in Nepal floods, landslides after rains***

The floods brought traffic and normal activity to a standstill in the Kathmandu valley over the weekend. Nepal’s home ministry said 170 people had been killed across the country, with another 42 still missing. At least 35 of those killed were aboard three vehicles and were buried alive when earth from a landslide careened into a highway, south of Kathmandu. (*Dawn, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

## **13.2 # Typhoon**

### ***Six die in Japan as typhoon grinds on***

At least six people were dead as Typhoon Shanshan crept eastward through Japan, drenching large areas with torrential rain, triggering landslide and flood warnings hundreds of kilometres from the storm’s centre. One person was missing and more than 100 have been injured. (*Dawn, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Monstrous typhoon tears through Philippines and China, kills 22***

Asia’s most powerful storm this year made landfall in northern Vietnam, killing at least four people after tearing through China’s island of Hainan and the Philippines. Super Typhoon Yagi hit island districts of Vietnam. Yagi had already claimed the lives of at least two people in Hainan and 16 people in the Philippines having formed east of the archipelago earlier in the week. (*Dawn, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Typhoon Yagi claims 59 lives in Vietnam***

The death toll in Vietnam from Typhoon Yagi jumped to 59, as business leaders said the storm had been a “disaster” for the country’s vital manufacturing sector. (*Dawn, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Vietnam puts Typhoon Yagi economic losses at \$3.3bn***

Vietnam suffered \$3.3 billion in economic losses as a result of deadly Typhoon Yagi, which swept across the country's north earlier this month causing hundreds of fatalities. Yagi battered northern Vietnam, Laos, Thailand and Myanmar in early September, triggering floods and landslides that left more than 700 people dead. Officials have calculated that economic losses in communist Vietnam amount to \$3.3 billion. A total of 299 people were killed and 34 reported missing in Vietnam, while officials in junta-ruled Myanmar have confirmed 433 fatalities with 79 still missing. The typhoon was the strongest to hit northern Vietnam in decades, bringing powerful winds and a deluge of rain to the country's densely populated Red River delta. The vital agricultural region is also home to major manufacturing hubs, and the storm damaged factories and infrastructure, and inundated farmland.

More than 390,000 houses were damaged or flooded, more than 345,000 hectares of crops were damaged and 5.6 million head of poultry were killed due to Yagi, figures from the Vietnam's agriculture ministry said. Six million children across the region were affected by the storm, according to the United Nations children's agency UNICEF, with access to clean water, education, healthcare, food and shelter all compromised. Vietnam is prone to tropical storms, which often bring deadly flash floods and landslides, hitting the country between June and November every year. But human-driven climate change is causing more intense weather patterns that can make destructive floods more likely. (*Business Recorder, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 1*)

## **13.3 # Hurricane**

### ***Monster hurricane menaces Florida***

Parts of Florida face "unsurvivable" conditions when Hurricane Helene hits, the US weather service said, warning that howling wind will drive destructive waves and storm surge as high as 20 feet onto low-lying coast. (*Dawn, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

### ***60 die as hurricane wreaks havoc in US southeast***

Southeastern US states started a massive cleanup and recovery effort after winds, rain and storm surges from Hurricane Helene snuffed out power for millions, destroyed roads and bridges and caused catastrophic flooding from Florida to Virginia. The storm caused at least 60 deaths in South Carolina, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia. Officials feared still more bodies would be discovered across several states. Damage estimates ranged from \$15 billion to more than \$100 billion, insurers and forecasters said. Property damage and lost economic output will become more clear as officials assess the destruction. (*Dawn, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

## **13.4 # Storm**

### ***Strongest storm in seven decades pounds Shanghai***

The normally bustling financial hub of Shanghai was brought to a standstill as residents sheltered at home to wait out the worst of the most powerful tropical cyclone to directly



hit the city since 1949. Typhoon Bebinca, which made landfall in the Chinese megacity, packed top wind speeds of 151 kilometres per hour near its eye. Rain lashed the city of 25 million and strong winds felled more than 10,000 trees as over 414,000 people were evacuated in Bebinca's path. (*Dawn, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

#### **14 # NATURAL DISASTERS**

*Not any preferable news to be included in this month.*

#### **15 # RESISTANCE**

##### ***News Makers: Kolkata (India)***

Social activists and students shout slogans during a protest march to condemn the rape and murder of a doctor. The discovery of the 31-year-old doctor's bloodied body at a state-run hospital on Aug 9 stoked nationwide anger at the chronic issue of violence against women that sparked strikes by medics and rallies backed by thousands of ordinary citizens across India. (*Dawn, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

##### ***News Makers: London (England)***

Protesters lie down outside the castle walls during a weekend of activities at an Upgrade Democracy camp, created by members of the climate change protest group Extinction Rebellion in Windsor. They gathered in Windsor Home Park for three days of activities to "propose democratic renewal as the answer to the climate and nature emergencies". (*Dawn, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

##### ***Thousands of US hotel workers strike as contract talks break down***

Some 10,000 US hotel workers began a multi-day strike in several cities after contract talks with hotel operators Marriott International, Hilton Worldwide, and Hyatt Hotels reached an impasse, the Unite Here union said. Unite Here, which represents workers in hotels, casinos, and airports across the United States and Canada, said thousands of workers at 25 hotels are on strike in some major travel destinations including San Francisco and San Diego in California, Hawaii's capital city Honolulu, Boston, Seattle, and Greenwich, Connecticut, with workers from additional cities ready to join the walkout as the Labor Day holiday weekend continues. The strike is taking place with the industry facing a 9% increase in Labor Day weekend domestic travel compared to last year. The strike comes as 40,000 Unite Here hotel workers across 20 cities face expiring contracts this year. Negotiations for new four-year contracts have been taking place since May, and about 15,000 of those workers have authorized strikes in 12 markets. (*Business Recorder, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, Page 9*)

##### ***Thousands take to streets against new French PM***

Thousands of left-wing demonstrators took to the streets across France to protest against the nomination of the centre-right Michel Barnier as prime minister and denounce President Emmanuel Macron's "power grab." Police said that around 26,000 people demonstrated in Paris, while the left claimed a much higher turnout. Smaller rallies took

place in other cities across France including Nantes in the west, Nice and Marseille in the south and Strasbourg in the east. (*Dawn, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Kosovo reopens two Serbia border crossings after protests***

Kosovo reopened 2 of its 4 border crossings with Serbia after protests on Serbian side blocking cross-border traffic ended. (*Business Recorder, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 12*)

### ***Workers at Samsung India plant strike***

Hundreds of workers at a Samsung Electronics plant in southern India have begun an indefinite strike to demand higher wages, partly hitting production. The strike comes after Samsung Electronics' biggest union in South Korea held a four-day strike in August demanding higher wages and bonuses after talks with management fell through. Samsung employs under 2,000 workers at its Sriperumbudur plant near the city of Chennai which makes refrigerators and washing machines. Around half of the daily production was affected at factory as many workers did not turn up for work, an industry source with direct knowledge said. (*Business Recorder, September 10<sup>th</sup>, Page 5*)

### ***Striking Indian doctors defy court over rape protests***

Junior doctors in India's West Bengal state have vowed to keep up a strike in protest at the rape and murder of a trainee doctor unless their demands are met, defying a Supreme Court deadline. While demonstrations in other states have been gradually called off after Supreme Court formed a hospital safety task force, doctors in West Bengal, where the incident happened at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata, have continued their protest. West Bengal Junior Doctors' Front marched in Kolkata, with junior doctors from several medical colleges in state lending support, to press its demands for justice for victim and better security. (*Dawn, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Boeing's factory workers go on strike, halting 737 MAX production***

Boeing's US west coast factory workers walked off the job after overwhelmingly rejecting a contract deal, halting production of the planemaker's strongest-selling model and sending shares down over two per cent. The first strike since 2008 comes as the planemaker is under heavy scrutiny from regulators and customers after a door panel blew off a 737 MAX jet mid-air in January. The mounting crises hit Boeing's stock and sparked a leadership upheaval. The stock has lost nearly 38pc so far this year, losing \$58 billion in market value. (*Dawn, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

### ***Thousands in France protest 'rape culture'***

Thousands took to the streets across French cities to demand an end to rape and support the main plaintiff in a mass sexual assault trial that has shocked country. Gisele Pelicot, who is using her married name, has requested the trial of her ex-husband and 50 co-defendants since September 2 be made public to raise awareness about the use of drugs to commit abuse. Dominique Pelicot, her partner of around five decades, has admitted to drugging her for years to rape her or watch her being raped while unconscious by several strangers he recruited online. (*Dawn, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

***Climate demo blocks Hague motorway during police strike***

Hundreds of climate activists blocked a major motorway running through The Hague, urging an end to billions of euros in Dutch fossil fuel subsidies in their “most disruptive” action yet. The early part of the demonstration, organised by the Extinction Rebellion (XR) group, coincided with a police strike over pensions. But the strike ended and police promptly intervened to break up the demo, which local authorities had declared illegal. Officers forcibly removed several activists, who refused to leave the scene. Some chained themselves to railings or lay flat on the ground to make it harder for police to remove them. Officers deployed electric saws to cut through chains. Protestors watching from a bridge over the road chanted “you are not alone” and “this is what democracy looks like.” (*Dawn, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

***News Makers: Jakarta (Indonesia)***

Farmers protest in front of the parliament building against the Indonesian government's "failure to implement agrarian reforms". (*Dawn, September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

***Protest: New York (United States of America)***

Pro-Palestinian protesters block traffic near the United Nations headquarters. The protesters, who were calling for a ceasefire in Gaza, protested the visit of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who moved his speech at the United Nations General Assembly due to the fighting in Lebanon. (*Dawn, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 11*)

***News Makers: Amritsar (India)***

Protesting farmers dump sacks of basmati rice along a street. (*Dawn, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Page 10*)

## **About Us**

Roots for Equity was formed in 1997 and formally registered in 2000. The organization works with the most vulnerable, marginalized communities that include small and landless farmers, women and religious minorities in the rural and urban sector. The inequities in society are a result of the oppression and exploitative forces of feudalism, imperialist corporate hegemony often termed as globalization, and patriarchy.

We believe that a democratic base is essential for the social and economic development of the country. This is not possible without mobilization of communities themselves; no doubt only socially conscious and politically active communities can demand and achieve social justice. Roots remains committed to being an active part of communities' struggle to achieve political, social, environmental and economic justice.

### **Our Mission**

Our mission is to strengthen communities and movements for attaining political, economic, social and environmental justice.

### **Our Vision**

Our vision is a genuinely democratic society with its people free from inequities, marginalization and exploitation.

### **Our Objectives**

- (i) Organizing and mobilizing grass root communities and movements for attaining basic rights;
- (ii) Action research in collaboration with impacted vulnerable communities on issues and impacts of globalization, patriarchy, and feudalism;
- (iii) Capacity building of grass root leaders and creating a grass roots knowledge base for attaining social justice;
- (iv) Engaging with people's organizations and movements to amplify the voices of the most marginalized sectors of our society, locally, nationally and internationally.

## **Roots for Equity**

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